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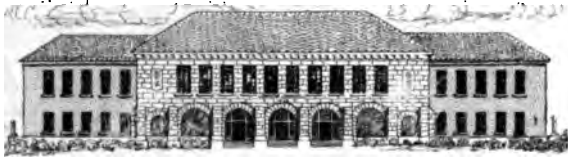
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M. B. Anderson,

March 1854

WITH COMPLIMENTS OF

THE PUBLISHERS.

This book is crammed full of valuable material, but is useless for me as a text-book by its frequent vulgarity. Its tone is that the racy American newspaper writer, whose least fault is over-refinement. For example under coarseness, p. 453, the last sent. of author's remark is a most pardonable illustrative example of the fault under discussion. See p. 383, and of little girl. (over)

At p. 374-5, Anecdote (jilted lady) not in print. Not slang but Irish ball  
269. Story of Dickens & Thackeray probably a fable. Have seen it applied to Fenway.

P. 349. weazened should be weagins.

P. 377. Underlined words call equalisms, not slang. P. 607-8 from N.Y. Sun, in very bad taste & utterly futile as criticism.

P. 617. Quotation from Emerson not in print. A perfect metaphor.

P. 344. Smack. He speaks wiser than he knows.





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A SYSTEM OF RHETORIC.





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A  
SYSTEM  
OF  
RHETORIC

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY

BY  
C. W. BARDEEN

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**1884**

## PREFACE.

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IN presenting to the public a new text-book on Rhetoric, the author asks attention to these features as characteristic :

(1.) It is kept in the foreground throughout, that the fundamental law of rhetoric is adaptation ; that the form of discourse, like the fashion of clothing, has no intrinsic beauty, but is or is not artistic as it does or does not produce the effect designed, *at the time and under the circumstances.*

(2.) That the student may look on rhetoric as an art, not like trigonometry which he *may* use, but like arithmetic which he *must* use, its most important laws are developed in the practical treatment of Conversation and Letter-Writing. The boy who does not care to be taught speech-making and verse-writing may be glad of help to feel at ease among strangers, and to write a business letter.

To this is added instruction in Narration and Description. These are forms of composition in which the essential element is not literary taste but personal experience. Any man may be called upon to tell or to write for the newspaper what he has done or seen, and every man should be able to do it well.

Because Conversation, Letter-Writing, Narration, and

Description are of immediate interest to every one, they are the essential portion of the subject, and for scholars who do not care for more, this part of the book, including a full treatment of Punctuation, is published in a separate volume, called "The Elements of Practical Rhetoric."

(3.) With the Essay begins what is properly literary work. One *must* converse, write letters, narrate, describe, —and the only question is whether one shall do it well or ill. But one need not write for the magazines or deliver orations or publish poems, unless one has a taste that way. Hence this part of the subject has been kept distinct, and for those who so prefer it is published in a separate volume, called "A System of Advanced Rhetoric."

Especial pains has been taken in the treatment of Preparation and Invention. The principles laid down are familiar to practised writers, but are usually reached by experience instead of by instruction. It is believed that these chapters will do much for young authors to make the way easy and definite.

(4.) The mechanism of composition, instead of being scattered throughout the book, is gathered into Part I., serving as an introduction. The treatment differs from that usually found in so-called "Composition Books," in that it treats the sentence from a point of view purely rhetorical. Hence arrangement of words, phrases, and clauses is made prominent, the principles under this head being distinguished from the rest under the title of "Observations." These will be found to occupy more than half the space given, and their importance cannot be too strongly insisted upon.

For those who desire, Part I. is published by itself, in a volume called "Outlines of Sentence-Making."

(5.) Throughout the book there is a profusion of illus-

trations, believed in this subject to be particularly essential. Anecdotes have been chosen wherever practicable, because a blunder that is ludicrous is more easily remembered and avoided. The bearing of the anecdote on the principle illustrated will not always be seen at a glance by most pupils; but the point will be found when searched for, and the profit will be greater for the search. Throughout the author has aimed to be suggestive rather than exhaustive; to quicken thought as well as to convey information.

(6.) The multitude of quotations from leading authors on rhetoric serves a double purpose, the language of most of them being referred to throughout the book in illustration of the qualities of style. It is believed that the frequency of credit given will be in most cases sufficient acknowledgment; but in a few instances the memorandum of the source of a quotation has been lost. Two books, so far the best in their respective departments that intelligent treatment must follow them closely, deserve especial mention: these are, "The Art of Extempore Speech," by M. Bautain; and "The Art of Reading," by M. Legouvé.

Upon a subject like this, always a favorite theme with the best writers, it would be preposterous to hope for originality. What is true is as old as Aristotle, and what should be announced as new in principle might safely be condemned as untrue. Yet because rhetoric is a means to an end, the application of its principles must vary with the age and the people where it is to be exercised. This is an age of newspapers, and we are a busy people—with little leisure to contemplate beauty of diction, but accustomed to glance down the column to see what the writer is aiming at and whether he hits it.

As a practical art, modern rhetoric must accept and

yield to this tendency, and its canons of criticism must be applied to the morning journals. It is nowhere stated in this book at what point in the Iliad the first simile occurs; but there are many quotations from newspapers just now most popular, with some effort to distinguish power from bombast, humor from vulgarity and imbecility. This criticism the student is expected to carry further and apply to his daily reading—which is more likely to be of the New York *Herald* and the Burlington *Hawkeye*, than of Hesiod and Catullus.

In short, this book is written from the standpoint of one whose daily work it has been for some years to read and select and publish manuscripts, who knows from experience the actual difficulties and faults of young writers, and who would like to help them. Hence the treatment throughout is practical rather than scholastic, adding much that is unusual in text-books of the kind, and omitting some things that since the time of Campbell and Blair have been considered conventional. The author hopes that trial will prove these changes to have been made with good reason, and the book to have contributed something toward general culture in good speech and good writing.

NOVEMBER 2, 1883.



**ELEMENTS OF PRACTICAL RHETORIC.**

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**PART I.**

**SENTENCE-MAKING.**—Through Facility to Felicity.

**PART II.**

**CONVERSATION.**—Main Purpose, to Promote Sociability.

**PART III.**

**LETTER-WRITING.**—Main Purpose, to Convey Information.

**PART IV.**

**THE ESSAY.**—Main Purpose, to Interest.

**PART V.**


**ORATORY.**—Main Purpose, to Persuade.

**PART VI.**

**POETRY.**—Main Purpose, Contemplation.







PART I.

SENTENCE-MAKING





## PART I.

### *SENTENCE-MAKING.*

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#### SECTION FIRST.

##### SIMPLE SENTENCES.

**Composition** is the art of arranging our thoughts, and expressing them in appropriate language.

All thoughts are expressed by means of Sentences.

The formation of Sentences is therefore the first step in Composition.

**The Simple Sentence** is the basis of composition, and the foundation of all other sentences. It is so called because it is the expression of a single thought, and contains only one Subject and one Predicate.

All other sentences are merely combinations of Simple Sentences. They must therefore contain two or more Subjects, and two or more Predicates.

**The Subject** in every Simple Sentence is that of which something is affirmed; the **Predicate** is that which is affirmed of the Subject.

*Examples.*

SUBJECT.		PREDICATE.
	Birds	fly.
	Some birds	fly swiftly.
	Some birds of prey	fly very swiftly.
Some birds of prey having secured their victim,		fly very swiftly with it to their nests.

In the first example we have the simplest form of the Subject and Predicate ; in the other three, we have expanded forms.

**The Object.**—When the Predicate contains a transitive verb, it can be subdivided into Predicate and Object. Thus :

SUBJECT.	PREDICATE.	OBJECT.
The scholar	repeats	the lessons.
The diligent scholar	repeats correctly	the lessons of the day.
The diligent scholar being always prepared,	repeats correctly to his master	the different lessons of the day.

## THE SUBJECT.

**The Subject** of a Simple Sentence may be either (1) a Noun, (2) a Pronoun, (3) an Adjective used as a noun, (4) an Infinitive, or (5) a Participle. Thus :

(1) *Procrastination* is the thief of time.—YOUNG. (2) *He* taught us how to live and how to die.—TICKELL (of Addison). (3) *The upright* shall prosper. (4) *To suppress* the truth may be a duty to others ; never to *utter* a falsehood is a duty to ourselves.—HARE. (5) *Doing* his duty is the delight of a good man.

EXERCISE I.—Complete the following sentences by supplying appropriate subjects.

NOTE I.—Every affirming sentence begins with a Capital, and ends with a Period. See page 257.

*Example.*—*The shepherd* tends his flock. —tends his flock. —praises the scholar. —overcomes difficulties. —enlightens the earth. —promotes health. —import cargoes. —succeeds summer. —cultivates the ground. —produces fruit. —moves the train. —gather moss. —lash the shore. —sounds the charge.

—cleaves the air. —ploughs the main. —build nests. —make long voyages. —guards the house. —yields a costly fur. —buries its eggs in the sand. —walks rapidly over the hot desert. —often baffles the hounds. —is adapted to their kind of life. —are termed oviparous. —forms a diphthong. —are called polysyllables. —is the ear. —directs all animals in the choice of food. —lies between the tropics. —is situated between the torrid and the north frigid zone. —affords a striking illustration of the doom of insatiable ambition. —cannot vie with the beauties of nature. —will prove a source of happiness.

**Obs. 1.**—The subject usually precedes the predicate; but may follow it when the sentence is introduced by *it*, *this*, *there*, *now*, etc., as in the following sentence: It is easy to go.

It is necessary that there should be a general understanding as to the relative position of the subject and the object, since both have in English the same form. In the sentence, *John struck James*, it would be impossible to tell which struck and which received the blow except on the general principle of arrangement that the subject precedes and the object follows the verb. Hence in poetry, the fact that this principle is often disregarded may occasion ambiguity. Thus :

And all the air a solemn stillness holds.—GRAY.

The duke yet lives that Henry shall depose,

And him outlive, and die a violent death.—SHAKSPERE.

See also pages 293, 294.

**Infinitives** commonly give up their formal place as subject or as object, mostly in favor of a provisional pronoun—*it*, *this*, *that*.

The anticipation of the infinitive by means of *it* is exceedingly frequent. “It was not easy to wound his feelings;” “My patron had it not in his power to introduce me personally;” *it* is the formal subject in the one case, and the formal object in the other, while the infinitives *to wound* and *to introduce*, which are the real subject and object, are formally said to be in apposition to the

pronoun. In careful writing, the form in *to* has a monopoly of this usage.—BAFN.

Thus, we should not say, "It was not easy wounding his feelings;" "He had it not in his power introducing me personally."

**Obs. 2.**—The natural order of words in a sentence may be varied in accordance with the first law of Force, that *emphatic words must stand in positions emphatic because unusual*; as when the subject is removed from the beginning of a sentence, or the predicate is put there. Thus:

Much is this inculcated by Cicero and Quintilian.—BLAIR.

*Flashed* all their sabres bare.—TENNYSON.

And *shrieks* the wild sea-mew.—BYRON.

But whose went his rounds, when flew bat, flitted midge.—BROWNING.

When the subject is a pronoun, the object may in like manner be put before the verb. Thus:

Some he imprisoned, others he put to death.

Military courage, the boast of the sottish German, of the frivolous and prating Frenchman, of the romantic and arrogant Spaniard, he neither possesses nor values.

But where both subject and object are substantives, such inversion would produce ambiguity (see Obs. 1, page xix). To indicate emphasis, therefore, the form of the sentence must be changed. In the sentence, "John struck James," we can in speaking give special stress to either of the three words that we wish especially to emphasize. In writing we can italicize either of the three, as, "*John* struck James," where it is assumed that James is struck, and the question is as to who did it; or, "John *struck* James," where it is assumed that John did something to James, and the question is as to what he did to him; or, "John struck *James*," where it is assumed that John struck somebody, and the question is as to whom he struck. But both vocal emphasis and written italics are so frequently misused that it is better so to construct the sentence that the arrangement shall make the meaning clear. Thus the three meanings of the sentence given are indicated clearly as follows:

It was John that struck James; What John did to James was to strike him; It was James that was struck by John.

The emphasis of the predicate might be shown by this arrangement, "Struck was James by John." This inversion would be suitable in poetry, and is sometimes unobjectionable in prose of an elevated character. But with ideas and words so commonplace as these such an arrangement would be bombastic.

**Obs. 3. Inversion.**—We can often put the verb before the subject by beginning with an adverb, or otherwise changing the form of the sentence. This structure is called Inversion. Thus :

There goes a man, down the  
road.

Scarcely had Tom spoken,  
when, etc.

Then came the crisis.

Such was his fate.

Now is your time.

No sooner had we started, than.

How are the mighty fallen.

Swiftly flew the arrow.

Especially in the Subjunctive Mood, is it common to use such forms as, *Were I an officer*, instead of, *If I were an officer*.

Some writers practise this degree of inversion, which our language bears, much more than others ; Lord Shaftesbury, for instance, much more than Mr. Addison ; and to this sort of arrangement is owing, in a great measure, that appearance of strength, dignity, and measured harmony which Lord Shaftesbury's style possesses. This will appear from the following sentences of his "Inquiry into Virtue ;" where all the words are placed, not strictly in the natural order, but with that artificial construction which may give the period most emphasis and grace. He is speaking of the misery of vice :

This, as to the complete immoral state, is what, of their own accord, men readily remark. Where there is this absolute degeneracy, this total apostasy from all candor, trust, or equity, there are few who do not see and acknowledge the misery which is consequent. Seldom is the case misconstrued, when at worst. The misfortune is, that we look not on this depravity, nor consider how it stands, in less degree. As if, to be absolutely immoral, were, indeed, the greatest misery ; but, to be so in a little degree, should be no misery or harm at all. Which, to allow, is just as reasonable as to own that 'tis the greatest ill of a body to be in the utmost manner maimed or distorted ; but



that, to lose the use only of one limb, or to be impaired in some single organ or member, is no ill worthy of the least notice. (H. 82.)

Here is no violence done to the language, though there are many inversions. All is stately, and arranged with art; which is the greatest characteristic of this author's style.

We need only open any page of Mr. Addison to see quite a different order in the construction of sentences.

Our sight is the most perfect, and most delightful, of all our senses. It fills the mind with the largest variety of ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues the longest in action, without being tired, or satiated with its proper enjoyments. The sense of feeling can, indeed, give us a notion of extension, shape, and all other ideas that enter at the eye, except colors; but, at the same time, it is very much strained and confined in its operations, etc.—*Spectator*, No. 411.

In this strain he always proceeds, following the most natural and obvious order of the language: and if, by this means, he has less pomp and majesty than Shaftesbury, he has, in return, more nature, more ease and simplicity; which are beauties of a higher order.—BLAIR.

It is not upon such changes as these that I propose to remark, but upon certain rather newfangled forms of expression which seem to me affected and not felicitous. The first of these which I shall bring up is a change in the position of the verbs *be*, *have*, and *do* in sentences in which the latter clause makes a comparison with something set forth in the former. For example:

Lord George also was displeased—more thoroughly displeased *than had been* his wife.  
—TROLLOPE: *Popejoy*, Chapter 4.

Bankruptcy has tended, as might have been expected, to produce bankruptcy; and for all purposes of panic as well as business, New York and London are as close *as were* London and Manchester a few years ago.—*Fall Mail Budget*, June 8, 1878.

It is needless to give more instances: the writing of the day is full of them, and Mr. Trollope, the chief, and one of the earliest, if not the earliest, of offenders, is but the foremost man of a multitude. This placing of the verb directly after the conjunction or preposition is a new trick in style. It is sheer affectation, and, if I do not err, is quite un-English. In such sentences as those given above, the simple English construction is, "more thoroughly displeased *than* his wife *had been*," "are as close *as* London and Manchester *were* a few years ago." The placing of the subject of the verb after it, except by poetic license, or in very elevated prose (and even there with great discretion), is not English, it is not clear, it is not natural. No good speaker of English would talk in this style, even in the soberest conversation. If I remember rightly, Macaulay never uses this construction, nor Cardinal Newman, a very correct writer, whose taste is unexceptionable. The fashion came in not long ago through the desire to avoid a verb of one syllable at the end of a sentence. For example: "Mary was not so beautiful *as* her sister was." To end the sentence with a disyllable instead of a monosyllable (a very weak affectation), the verb was transposed, and we had, "*As was* her sister." Whoever wishes to write clear, manly, and simple English will avoid this foolish fashion, which, however,

has become so prevalent that it appears with a most ridiculous incongruity even in such writing as that of the following passage from a report of a dramatic performance by "Count Joannes:"

"In the audience last night were many Yale students, who were, of course, boisterous and jolly, and led the attacks, but justice requires the remark that they did not say as many funny things as did two or three newsboys in the gallery."—R. G. WHITE.

**EXERCISE II.**—In the following sentences, change the form so as to put the Predicate before the Subject.

**NOTE II.**—*An inverted clause is usually set off from the rest of the sentence by a Comma. See page 293.*

*Examples.*—The express is going; *There goes* the express. The tug of war is coming; *Now comes* the tug of war. What he said is as follows; *This is* what he said.

I never before saw such a show. If I had known you were sick I should have come up. I am very glad to see you again. He jumped up. The thermometer dropped down. The chair fell over. She was, he said, the best of mothers. The issue, my lawyer writes, is doubtful. He was not once defeated. Satan came also, last of all. They didn't care for him. He shall go.

After inversion, the usual order of subject and predicate seems awkward; as, No contemptible orator he was.—**BLAIR.**

**EXERCISE III.**—Reconstruct the following sentences so as to show (1) that the emphasis is on the subject; (2) that it is on the predicate; and (3) that it is on the object.

*Example.*—(2) Found was the water by the crow. Water was found by the crow would usually answer for either (1) or (3), but if more positive emphasis is required, (1) It was the crow that found the water; (3) It was water that the crow found.

The crow found the water.

The boy threw pebbles.

Mary broke the pitcher.

The ostrich inhabits the desert.

The farmer raises corn.

**Obs. 4.**—When the subject is long or complicated it is well to summarize it before the verb.

For examples, see page 283.

#### THE OBJECT.

**The Object** of a simple sentence may be: (1) a Noun, (2) a Pronoun, (3) an Adjective used as a noun, (4) an Infinitive, or (5) a Participle.

*Examples.*—(1) Who steals my *purse*, steals *trash*. (2) We loved *her*, but she died. (3) His views and affections take in only the *visible*. (4) Learn to *labor* and to *wait*. (5) He prefers *walking* to riding.

EXERCISE IV.—Supply objects to the following transitive verbs.

*Example.*—The sun gilds the hill-top. The sun gilds—. The diligent boy deserves—. Education improves—. Fools despise—. Rain refreshes—. The gardener prunes—. The boy repeats his—. The king levied—. The physician prescribes—. Spring revives—. The hunter climbed—. The weary laborer reached—. Good men comfort—. Good kings love their—. The bridge spans—. Ducks frequent—.

**Participles and Verbal Nouns** differ in that a Participle retains the notion of time and agrees with the noun, while the Verbal Noun expresses only the abstract idea of the action, and is the object of the noun in the possessive.

**Obs. 5.**—Verbal Nouns should be avoided where verbs can be used instead, because unless immediately preceded by prepositions they may often be mistaken for participles.

EXERCISE V.—Change the following sentences by converting the verbal nouns into phrases.

*Example.*—When Horace trembled for the life of Virgil, it was an interesting moment, etc.

Horace [Horace's] trembling for the life of Virgil is an interesting moment [episode] in the history of poetry and [of] friendship.—GIBBON.

I assure you therefore seriously, and upon my honor, that the carrying [of] this point seems essential to the success of this measure.—W. PITT.

In hot climates, the letting into a country of a mass [of] stagnant water, etc.—BENTHAM.

The ascertaining [of] a principle in metaphysical science is sometimes the clearing up of a doctrine of revelation.—W. J. FOX.

Mr. Mill will see that the point of dubiety spoken of was one which suggests not the hanging of the culprit, but the sparing [of] him.—P. P. ALEXANDER.

In approaching the practical problem, there are two parts that will need to be kept distinct—the first starting of the new system, and the keeping [of] it going after it has been started.—CAIRNS.

#### MODIFIERS OF THE SUBJECT AND OF THE OBJECT.

**KINDS OF MODIFIERS.**—The Subject or the Object may be expanded by Modifiers of the following kinds: (1) Adjectives; (2) Possessives; (3) Appositives; (4) Participles; (5) Infinitives; (6) Preposition Phrases; (7) Adverbial Phrases; (8) Clauses.

(1) **Adjectives** may be roughly classed as (*a*) Descriptive, or as simply (*b*) Demonstrative.

**a. Descriptive Adjectives** limit the noun by naming some quality belonging to it.

**EXERCISE VI.**—Supply appropriate adjectives in the following sentences.

*Example.*—A disobedient child is a grief to his parents. A—child is a grief to his parents. A—zephyr played on the surface of the lake. The elephant is a very—animal. Gold is the—of all metals. A red morning sky betokens a—day. Hindostan has a

—climate. Money is a—source of strife. Some ground requires —weeding. The—heavens are a sublime spectacle. A—bower is pleasant in summer. The sheep supplies us with an endless variety of—material. Wheat was at one time a—article of food in this country. The rivers afford an—supply of fish. A—friend is the cordial of life. Milk is an—article of diet. Hannibal was a—enemy to the Romans. Belgium is a very—country. The Dutch are a very—people. Alfred was a—monarch. The wasp has a—waist.

**Obs. 6.—Fitting Adjectives.**—The descriptive adjectives employed indicate more surely than any other feature the quality of the author's style.

Don't say

It tastes <i>nice</i> , WHEN YOU MEAN	It tastes <i>delicious</i> .
She walks <i>nicely</i> ,	She walks <i>gracefully</i> .
He did it <i>nicely</i> ,	He did it <i>skilfully</i> .
She looks <i>nice</i> ,	She looks <i>charming</i> .
The water is <i>nice</i> ,	The water is <i>refreshing</i> .
He is a <i>nice</i> man,	He is a <i>pleasant</i> man.
A <i>nice</i> odor,	A <i>savory</i> odor.
A <i>nice</i> landscape,	A <i>lovely</i> landscape.
A <i>nice</i> smile,	A <i>winning</i> smile.
A <i>nice</i> mansion,	A <i>luxurious</i> mansion.
A <i>nice</i> cottage,	A <i>snug</i> cottage.
A <i>nice</i> companion,	An <i>agreeable</i> companion.

etc., etc.

That stupid vulgarism by which we use the word *nice* to denote almost every mode of approbation, for almost every variety of quality, and from sheer poverty of thought or fear of saying anything definite, wrap up everything indiscriminately in this characterless domino—speaking in the same breath of a *nice* cheese-cake, a *nice* tragedy, a *nice* oyster, a *nice* child, a *nice* man, a *nice* tree, a *nice* sermon, a *nice* day, and a *nice* country.—ARCHDEACON HARE.

When I first looked upon the Falls of the Clyde, I was unable to find a word to express my feelings. At last a man, a stranger to me, who arrived about the same time, said, "How majestic!" (It was the precise term, and I turned around, and was saying

"Thank you, sir! that is the exact word for it," when he added, *eodem flatu*)—"Yes, how very pretty!"—COLERIDGE.

EXERCISE VII.—Substitute other adjectives in the following sentences.

*Example.*—For *indigent*, poor, needy; *insufferable*, intolerable, unendurable; *jeering*, sneering, scoffing; *community*, fraternity, society; *flung*, threw, cast; *individual*, character, person; *kicked*, drove, spurned; *rage*, fury, passion; *mean*, slavish, servile; *unruly*, ungovernable, intractable; *wealthy*, rich, opulent; *longing*, panting, desiring; *forgiven*, excused, pardoned; *conspicuous*, distinguished, illustrious.

At Oxford, Johnson lived during about three years. He was indigent even to raggedness; and his look provoked a mirth and a compassion which were equally insufferable to his haughty temper. He was expelled from the quadrangle of Christ Church by the jeering looks which the members of that aristocratical community flung at the holes in his shoes. Some charitable individual placed a new pair at his door, but he kicked them away in a rage. Distress made him, not mean, but reckless and unruly. No wealthy gentleman commoner, longing for one-and-twenty, could have used the academical dignities with more gross disdain. Much was forgiven, however, to a stripling so loftily conspicuous by abilities and attainments.

In that portion of the western section of this empire which is ordinarily designated Somersetshire, there lately resided, and perhaps lives still, a gentleman whose appellation was Allworthy, and who might well be termed the favorite of both nature and fortune, because both of these seem to have striven which should bless and endow him most. In this contest, nature may appear to have come off triumphant, as she bestowed on him many endowments, while fortune had only one gift in her power; but in lavishing this, she was so very lavish, that others perhaps may consider this one endowment to have been more than equal to all the diversified blessings which he enjoyed from nature. From the anterior of these he received an agreeable appearance, a sound constitution, a solid intellect, and a good heart; by the latter, he was appointed to the heirship of one of the largest possessions in the country.

**Forms in Comparison.**—As a general rule, the comparative and superlative degrees are formed by appending *er* and *est* to adjectives of one or two syllables, and by prefixing *more* and *most* to adjectives of more than two syllables. The rule is not, however, arbitrary, and some writers allow themselves great liberty in the matter.

We find “honorablist” in Bacon; “virtuosest” in Milton; “beautifuller,” “beautifullest,” in Carlyle; “unrivalledest” in Howells.

Dean Alford speaks of “a more neat way of expressing.”

Groans and tears, looks and gestures, a flush or a paleness, are often the most clear reporters of the heart, and speak more directly to the hearts of others.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

Double comparatives are of course inadmissible; as, The last are indeed more preferable.—ADDISON.

**Obs. 7.**—**The comparative degree** must be used only of different objects, or of the same object at different stages of its existence. Therefore when a comparative is followed by *than*, the thing compared must be always excluded from the class of things with which it is compared, by *other* or some such word. Thus:

The letters published after C. Lamb’s death and that of his sister, by Mr. Talfourd, make up a volume of more interest to me than any [*other*] book of human composition.—C. R. LESLIE.

Probably Lord Halifax is better versed in the real history of the period . . . than any [*other*] living man or (“Bear” Ellis excepted) than any [*other*] man who ever lived.—*Political Portraits*.

“Your Englishman is just as serious in his sports as in any [*other*] act of his life.” “Much more so,” observed Mr. P.—C. DELMER.

*Compare*: “Scott’s works were the daily food, not only of his countrymen, but of all educated Europe.” Bain corrects this to “but of all the rest of educated Europe,” or to “the daily food not of his countrymen alone:” otherwise the implication is that Scott’s countrymen were not educated.

The objects compared must be in the same category.  
We cannot say, There is no nobler *calling* than a *teacher*.

Compare this sign in Essex, England :

NO HORSES SHOD ON SUNDAY,  
*Except Sickness and Death.*

**Obs. 8.**—The superlative degree, on the other hand, must be used only of objects in the same class.

Thus, St. Peter's is greater than any other church (not than any church), but, St. Peter's is the greatest of all churches (not, of all other churches).

EXERCISE VIII.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—It was the happiest time he had ever spent.

It was the happiest time he had ever yet spent.

This work was, however, destined to cause Lady Morgan more trouble and annoyance than she met with in the whole course of her literary life.—*Memoirs*.

Adam,

The comeliest man of men since born

His sons. The fairest of her daughters Eve.—MILTON.

The very class who, of all other citizens, were least to be trusted.  
. . . . Who they pronounce to be of all others the least fallible in their judgment. . . . It was the most amiable, although the least dignified, of all the party squabbles by which it had been preceded.—JAMES WILLIAMS.

Mr. Stanley was the only one of his predecessors who slaughtered the natives of the regions he passed through.—*The (London) Examiner*.

Errors in education should be less indulged than any.—LOCKE.

I know none so happy in his metaphors as Addison.—BLAIR.

No writer in our language is so purely English as he is, or borrows so little assistance from words of foreign derivation.—BLAIR.

This noble nation hath of all others admitted fewer corruptions.—SWIFT.

The vice of covetousness is what enters deepest into the soul of any other.—*Guardian*.



There is no talent so useful toward rising in the world or which puts men more out of the reach of fortune, than that quality generally possessed by the dullest of people, and that is, in common language, called discretion.—SWIFT.

**Obs. 9.—The superlative of two** seems on its face an absurd expression, and the young writer is advised in comparing two objects to use the comparative degree, preceded by the definite article.

Thus, He is the taller of the two ; not, He is tallest of the two.

DUAL FORMS, pertaining to two objects and not to more than two, are often misused in composition, but should be respected by those who would write irreproachably. Campbell says :

“Most languages distinguish dual from plural in numeral [*demonstrative*] adjectives. Thus in English,

<i>When the discourse is of</i>	<i>two ; of several :</i>
collectively,	both, all ;
distributively,	each, every ;
indiscriminately,	either, any ;
exclusively,	neither, none ;
relatively and interrogatively,	whether, which.

“This distinction in French hath been overlooked altogether, and in English is beginning at least in some instances to be confounded.”

That Campbell himself confounds it in the case of the comparative is shown in the following statement :

We say rightly either “This is the weaker of the two,” or “the weakest of the two.”—*Rhetoric*, i. 383.

HOW MANY ALTERNATIVES?—We are grateful to our esteemed contemporary, the *Herald*, for calling our attention to the phrase “three alternatives,” which, it seems, has got into our columns, and for pronouncing it bad English. We like nothing better than to be corrected when we are in the wrong. Such correction is the sure means of improvement, and improvement, progress, is one of the great ends of this mortal life. Candor also compels us to say that the *Herald* is correct in its criticism, and that the dictionaries generally take that view of the question which it propounds. Strictly speaking,

an alternative relates to the opportunity of choosing between two things; and yet if a writer speaks of three or four alternatives, his English is not absolutely vicious, because in that case he imagines the choice to be made between one of the things he refers to on one side and all the others on the other. For instance, when the order of the Osmanli was offered to Mr. Bennett in Constantinople, in recognition of his distinguished talents as a journalist, he had several alternatives, namely, first, to accept the compliment or to decline it; secondly, to accept it unconditionally, or to accept it on condition that he should be made an Osmanli of the first class, instead of the second or third class, which was offered him; thirdly, to accept it on condition that the act should be approved by the Administration at Washington and by Congress; fourthly, to accept it, whether with conditions or without, and to keep the fact private; or fifthly, to accept it and make the fact notorious. Does not this make five alternatives open to Mr. Bennett in regard to this single decoration of Turkish knighthood? Could he not choose either one of them and reject all the rest, putting the one he chose on one side and all the others together on the other, thus complying with the strict sense of the phrase by making his choice between two things only?

We take pleasure in the discussion of these nice questions of language with a learned and critical journal like the *Herald*; and we trust that whenever it sees us falling into a blunder, it will administer the necessary correction.—*N. Y. Sun*.

EXERCISE IX.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example*.—The mother seemed the younger of the two.

The mother seemed the youngest of the two.—THACKERAY (in *Esmond*).

If we consider the works of nature and art, as they are qualified to entertain the imagination, we shall find the last very defective in comparison of the former.—ADDISON.

The question may be said to be entirely open to the peculiar views of the presiding judge and the witnesses in each case, *neither* of whom have a definite standard of action in law or in medicine to guide them in their investigation.—*North American Review*.

That he [*Shakspeare*] wrote the plays which bear his name we know; but except by inference we do not know the years in which they were written, or even that in which *either* of them was first performed.—RICHARD GRANT WHITE.

Peasant, yeoman, artisan, tradesman, and gentleman could then be distinguished from *each* other almost as far as they could be seen. Except in cases of unusual audacity, *neither* presumed to wear the dress of his betters.—*Id.*

**Obs. 10.—Adverbs for Adjectives.**—By ellipsis adverbs sometimes do duty as adjectives. Though not without authority, this custom should be avoided.

There are a few disagreeable matters of style, such as the repeated use of the adverb *almost* as an adjective, "an *almost* child;" and the same misuse of other adverbs, as in—"to think on the *once* themes is to be by my *once* self;" and "joy at this house's *now* despair." Such things as these are too dreadful to criticise.  
—H. B. FIRMAN.

We seem to remember remarking that David Davis wouldn't look badly in the chair.—*Springfield Republican*. "Look badly" looks bad. Overhaul your grammar.—*Lowell Courier*. We copy the above in the hope that it may meet the eye of the schoolmaster. Among people who lay claim to culture we know of no more prevalent solecism than this "look badly," "feel nicely" atrocity. One might as well say "feel coldly," or "feel hotly."—*Boston Transcript*.

EXERCISE X.—Change the following sentences so as to escape the use of adverbs as adjectives.

*Example*.—In the situation he was then in.

In his then situation.—JOHNSON.

The seldom use of it.—TRENCH. (Here infrequent may be substituted for seldom.)

Our Lord's own use so frequently of the term.—TRENCH.

For in my then circumstances, the note was of much more consequence to me.—THACKERAY.

After the then country fashion.—KINGSLEY.

My Lord Duke's entertainments were both *seldom* and shabby.—THACKERAY.

**Adjectives for Adverbs.**—The use of adjectives for adverbs is inexcusable. Thus:

If with your inferiors speak no coarser than usual; if with your superiors no finer.—ALFORD.

He that lays open his vanity in public acts is no less absurd than he that lays open his bosom to an enemy whose drawn sword is pointed against it; for every man hath a dagger in his hand ready to stab the vanity of another whenever he perceives it.—FIELDING.

It should be added that a speaker's being well heard does not depend *near* so much on the loudness of the sounds, as on their

distinctness; and especially on the clear pronunciation of the consonants.—**WHATELY.**

**Obs. 11.**—The English adjective usually precedes the noun. The advantages of this arrangement are thus stated:

Is it better to place the adjective before the substantive, or the substantive before the adjective? Ought we to say with the French—*un cheval noir*; or to say as we do—a black horse? Probably most persons of culture would decide that one order is as good as the other. Alive to the bias produced by habit, they would ascribe to that the preference they feel for our own form of expression. They would expect those educated in the use of the opposite form to have an equal preference for that. And thus they would conclude that neither of these instinctive judgments is of any worth. There is, however, a philosophical ground for deciding in favor of the English custom. If “a horse black” be the arrangement, immediately on the utterance of the word “horse,” there arises, or tends to arise, in the mind, a picture answering to that word; and as there has been nothing to indicate what *kind* of horse, any image of a horse suggests itself. Very likely, however, the image will be that of a brown horse; brown horses being the most familiar. The result is that when the word “black” is added, a check is given to the process of thought. Either the picture of a brown horse already present to the imagination has to be suppressed, and the picture of a black one summoned in its place; or else, if the picture of a brown horse be yet unformed, the tendency to form it has to be stopped. Whichever is the case, a certain amount of hinderance results. But if, on the other hand, “a black horse” be the expression used, no such mistake can be made. The word “black,” indicating an abstract quality, arouses no definite idea. It simply prepares the mind for conceiving some object of that color; and the attention is kept suspended until that object is known. If, then, by the precedence of the adjective, the idea is conveyed without liability to error, whereas the precedence of the substantive is apt to produce a misconception, it follows that the one gives the mind less trouble than the other, and is therefore more forcible.

Possibly it will be objected that the adjective and substantive come so close together, that practically they may be considered as uttered at the same moment; and that on hearing the phrase “a horse black,” there is not time to imagine a wrongly colored horse before the word “black” follows to prevent it. It must be owned that it is not easy to decide by introspection whether this is so or not. But there are facts collaterally implying that it is not. Our ability to anticipate the words yet unspoken is one of them. If the ideas of the hearer kept considerably behind the expressions of the speaker, as the objection assumes, he could hardly foresee the end of a sentence by the time it was half delivered; yet this constantly happens. Were the supposition true, the mind, instead of anticipating, would be continually following more and more in arrear.

If the meanings of words are not realized as fast as the words are uttered, then the loss of time over each word must entail such an accumulation of delays as to leave a hearer entirely behind. But whether the force of these replies be or be not admitted, it will scarcely be denied that the right formation of a picture will be facilitated by presenting its elements in the order in which they are wanted, even though the mind should do nothing until it has received them all.—**HERBERT SPENCER.**

**Ambiguity** sometimes results from a neglect of this principle.

Thus a newspaper summarizes an official report as follows :

The report of Postmaster D. for the month of July to the Post-office Department shows that during that month there were 60 carriers employed, who made 24,844 delivery and 34,546 collection trips *daily*.

In other words, each carrier made nearly a thousand trips a day. Of course "daily trips" was intended, but the transposition makes of the adjective an adverb.

Even when the adjective modifiers are many and various, it is sometimes best to bring them in before the subject, especially in poetry.

**Obs. 12.**—In some cases, however, it is better that the adjective should follow the noun.

(a) *Custom* has fixed certain forms ; as :

Poet laureate, governor-general, lord paramount, knight errant, States General, court martial, body politic, notary public, sign-manual, Theatre Royal, letters patent, time immemorial, bride elect.

Compare lord-lieutenant, duchess-dowager, Knight Templar.

(b) *Complicated Adjectives*, whether aggregated or modified, usually follow, that the noun be not too long delayed. Thus :

*His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark brow'd. A system worthy of the name of religion. Details requisite for the house of a moderate gentleman. A man wise in his own conceit.*

**Obs. 13.**—A serious and very common error of arrangement is to place the noun between the adjective and the modifiers of the adjective.

*High voices in altercation*, and voices *high in altercation*, are by no means equivalent expressions. The first represents the voices as pitched high by native quality, and the other as pitched high by the excitement of the occasion.

In the following example, tastes would vary as to whether the adjectives should precede :

But while long, though unconscious, discipline has made it do this efficiently.—HERBERT SPENCER.

**b. Demonstrative Adjectives** distinguish the noun as an individual from others of its class, by *pointing out* instead of describing it.

These adjectives may be classified as (i.) Definite, (ii.) Indefinite, and (iii.) Numeral.

**i. Definite Adjectives** include (*a*) The Definite Article, (*β*) the pronoun adjectives, This and That.

*a. The Definite Article* is used to refer to something already distinguished in the mind from others of its class, or about to be distinguished by limitation.

Less frequently it is prefixed to plural adjectives ; as, "Naught save good of the departed ;" or to singular adjectives to form an abstract noun : as, "Worship of the visible ;" or before a singular noun to represent a class ; as, "The oak is harder than the elm." It is also prefixed to superlatives to make them more emphatic, and to comparatives when followed by *of*, or in phrases like "the more the merrier."

The definite article is nothing in itself ; it is a pointing word, and what it points to is given in the first instance by a relative clause to follow ; "the book that you wish," "the shop that we have passed." By the curtailments of the clause we reach the participial phrase, and then the adverbial phrase, the commonest of all ways of signifying the reference of the article ; "the clock in the steeple," "the way to glory," "the Tower of London." The vague preposition "of" answers the purpose.—BAIN.

**Obs. 14.**—The article must be repeated when the second of two connected nouns refers to a different object (see Obs. 35, page lvi). Thus :

*Referring to one object.*  
The secretary and treasurer.  
A black and white horse.

*Referring to two objects.*  
The secretary and the treasurer.  
A black and a white horse.

This applies also to adjectives that accompany the article and belong to both objects; as, Philosophers rejected with equal fervor the established religion and the [established] political creed.—LESLIE STEPHEN.

**EXERCISE XI.**—Improve the following sentences by repeating articles and adjectives where necessary.

*Example.*—They possessed both the civil and the criminal jurisdiction.

They possessed both the civil and criminal jurisdiction.—HUME. The elder and younger son . . . were, like the gentleman and lady in the weather-box, never at home together.—THACKERAY. The pursuers and pursued entered together. The lords spiritual and temporal, wisdom and folly, the virtuous and the vile, the learned and ignorant, the temperate and debauched, all give and return the jest.—BROWN. My Christian and surname begin and end with the same letters.—SPECTATOR. The French and English writers.—BLAIR. The creed of Zoroaster supposes the co-existence of a benevolent and malevolent principle.—WALTER SCOTT.

**EXERCISE XII.**—In the following sentences, state whether one object or more than one is referred to, and how the meaning may be changed by repeating or omitting the article.

*Example.*—Wanted a nurse and housemaid, means that the same person is to be both. Wanted a nurse and a housemaid, means that two persons are wanted.

The Town and County Bank. Alike the busy and the gay. And owns the patron, patriot, and the friend.—SAVAGE. She never considered the quality but merit of her visitors.—WM. PENN.

Before the use of the loadstone, or knowledge of the compass.—DRYDEN.

**Obs. 15.**—Sometimes, especially when there are more than two connected nouns referring to the same object, the

article is repeated for emphasis. In such cases, the ambiguity is usually removed by the context. Thus:

Dare any soul breathe a word against the sweetest, the tenderest, the most angelical of young women?—THACKERAY.

Of these pamphlets the longest, the bitterest, and the ablest was commonly ascribed to Ferguson.—MACAULAY.

I returned a sadder and a wiser man.—COLERIDGE.

**Obs. 16.**—Whether we should say “the first two,” or “the two first,” is a matter of discussion.

The meaning to be expressed is, bring me the first, second, and third of a row; or bring me all from the first to the third. Desiring a shorter mode of statement, we are accustomed to say “the first three,” or “the three first,” neither of the forms admitting of being construed strictly.

The following occurs in Mätzner:

In connection with *first* and *other*, the cardinal number is found before or after: “The *four first* acts” (Sheridan, *Critic*, I. 1); “For the *first ten* minutes” (Cooper, *Spy*, 13); “*Four other* children” (Lewes, *Goethe*, I. 18); “*Other seven* days” (Gen. viii. 12).

The preference of grammarians is for the “first three;” with regard to “three first,” they ask, How can three be first? The only answer is to retort that the “first three” is inapplicable to the first, second, and third of a single pile; it supposes a line of three abreast.

We find in good use such expressions as these: “the *two highest* men;” “the *two succeeding* chapters;” “the *two next* candidates.” Of a work brought out in two volumes, a critic said—“the *two best* volumes of light reading that have appeared this year.” This would have been a case for “the best two volumes.”

Gibbon says of the history of Rome:

“The *seven first* centuries were filled with a succession of triumphs.” This is hardly to be imitated; no more can we commend “the *first seven* centuries.” Better avoid the form altogether. “For seven centuries (from the first) the history was a succession of triumphs.”—BAIN.



( $\beta$ ) **This** and **That** are used to refer distinctively to two objects already mentioned.

**Obs. 17.**—For this purpose we have a series of adjective couples; as,

That,	This.
The one,	The other.
The former,	The latter.
The first,	The second.
The first named,	The last named, etc.

By writers generally, the couple “former and latter” is more used than any of the rest. In my judgment, the other forms are in many instances preferable. From an extensive examination of cases, I am inclined to believe that the reference by “former and latter” is frequently very obscure. I subjoin a few examples, selecting first from Gibbon, who makes great use of the construction.

We have computed the *inhabitants*, and contemplated the *public works* of the Roman Empire. The observation of the number and greatness of its cities will serve to confirm the *former* and multiply the *latter*.

A most perplexed reference. The antecedent to “former” should have been “[we have given] a *computation of the inhabitants*,” while “multiply the *latter*” refers simply to *public works*. There is, moreover, the very common fault of such references—too great a distance from the subjects. Nothing short of repeating the subjects themselves, or giving a various wording of them, would enable a reader easily to follow the passage. The second sentence might run thus:

A consideration of the number and the greatness of the cities belonging to the Empire, will confirm our statement of the population, and enhance our estimate of the public works.

The productions of happier climates and the industry of civilized nations were introduced into the West; and the natives were encouraged to multiply the *former* and improve the *latter*.

In this case, “the one and the other,” a more homely English form, or “the first and the second,” would answer equally well. But the double reference itself is of questionable propriety in such

cases. It is very artificial and clumsy, if not slovenly. We are introduced to two subjects, but are not warned to keep in mind the precise order that they are given in; presently we come upon words that direct us to recall first one and then the other, in the exact order; the hardship being aggravated by the absence of any marked natural sequence. Further, the suggestion of the idea of *contrast* is not inconsiderable; a contrast, however, that turns out, on examination, to be merely a contrast of position, or one of statement. . . .

Compare with these instances Macaulay's practice:

James had, during the last year of his reign, been even more hated by the Tories than by the Whigs; for to the *Whigs* he was only an enemy, and to the *Tories* he had been a faithless and thankless friend.

Our translation of the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican is an interesting example of our mode of reference for a twofold object.

Two men went up into the temple to pray, *the one* a Pharisee and *the other* a Publican. The *Pharisee* stood and prayed thus——. And the *Publican*, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heav'n. . . . I tell you *this man* went down to his house justified rather than *the other*.

First the subjects are introduced by their special designations, along with the correlatives "the one" and "the other," which serve to indicate a contrast, and to warn the reader that they are to be kept distinctly separate. On the first recurrence of the subjects, the names are repeated: on the second occasion, "this" is used for the second of the two, being the nearest; "the other" is used for the first. . . . The following old paraphrase of the passage now quoted shows the more usual practice in making "the one" and "the other" stand for "the first and the second," or "the former and the latter."

Did two go up to the temple to pray?  
Or rather say *the one* went up to brag, *the other* to pray.  
*The one* the nearer to the altar trod,  
*The other* nearer to the altar's God.

In easy cases, I should prefer this form. Next to it, in my judgment, is "first" and "second."—BAIN.

**THIS SIDE OR THE OTHER.**—"Say, mister, are we on this side of the bridge or the other?" asked a placid old lady of a gentleman on a Court Street car yesterday morning.

"We are on this side," responded the gentleman, gravely.

"Laws me! Then we ain't anywhere near Greenwood Cemetery yet?"

"Yes, madam, we are within a few squares of it."

"Sakes a massy! I thought Greenwood was on the other side of the bridge!"

"No, madam; on this side."

"Well, that pesky conductor told me it was on the other side when we started."

"It was, madam, on the other side then, but we have crossed the bridge."

"Then we are on the other side!"

"No, madam, we are on this side of the bridge. We've passed it."

"And is Greenwood on the other side?" she asked, starting up in alarm.

"No, it is on this side."

"Don't try to fool me with your nonsense," exclaimed the old lady, indignantly. "Don't try to make me think that Greenwood is on this side of the bridge when I know better, and don't try to make me believe I'm on this side of the bridge when I know I'm on the other! Don't ye do it."—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

(II.) **Indefinite Adjectives** include ( $\alpha$ ) the Indefinite Article; ( $\beta$ ) the pronoun adjectives, except **This** and **That**.

( $\alpha$ ) **The Indefinite Article** is the sign of the singular number.

Our language has, however, two idioms that form exceptions. The article may be used (i.) with a plural adjective, a singular noun, and a singular verb; as, "Many a man does it;" (ii.) with an adjective of multitude, a plural noun, and a plural verb; as, "A thousand liveried angels lackey her."—*MILTON*.

A common noun in the singular, not preceded by some other adjective or by the definite article, takes the indefinite article, except in the following cases:

(i.) In address; as, Wretch, I dare thee.

(ii.) Where the singular is used instead of the plural to express with more emphasis the attributes of a class; as, Man is mortal. Poet and Philosopher alike employ imagination.

(iii.) In such expressions as, He became captain, He was elected chairman, The rank of major, The relation of mother and child.

(iv.) In some few recognized idioms, growing out of effort to be concise; as, brought to table, leaving town, going to school, down hill, and the like.

For repetition of the article before connected nouns, see page **XXXV**.

**Obs. 18.**—THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE indicates one thing of a kind, and therefore must not be used to denote the whole kind.

We may say, The unicorn is a kind of rhinoceros, but not, The unicorn is a kind of a rhinoceros.

(iii.) **Numeral Adjectives** are the strictest mode of assigning degree, and are used in all exact measurements. They are either (*α*) Cardinal, or (*β*) Ordinal.

“John Phoenix” even went so far as to propose a system of numerical adverbs of degree.

Let us then represent by the number 100, the maximum, the *ne plus ultra* of every human quality—grace, beauty, courage, strength, wisdom, learning—everything. Let *perfection*, I say, be represented by 100, and an absolute minimum of all qualities by the number 1. Then by applying the numbers between, to the adjectives used in conversation, we shall be able to arrive at a very close approximation to the idea we wish to convey; in other words, we shall be enabled to speak the truth. Glorious, soul-inspiring idea! For instance, the most ordinary question asked of you is, “How do you do?” To this, instead of replying, “Pretty well,” “Very well,” “Quite well,” or the like absurdities—after running through your mind that *perfection* of health is 100, no health at all, 1—you say, with a graceful bow, “Thank you, I’m 52 to day;” or, feeling poorly, “I’m 18, I’m obliged to you;” or “I’m 68,” or “75,” or “87½,” as the case may be! Do you see how very close in this way you may approximate to truth; and how clearly your questioner will understand what he so anxiously wishes to arrive at—your *exact* state of health?

Let this system be adopted into our elements of grammar, our conversation, our literature, and we become at once an exact, precise, mathematical, truth-telling people. It will apply to everything but politics; there, truth being of no account, the system is useless. But in literature, how admirable! Take an example:

As a 19 young and 76 beautiful lady was 52 gayly tripping down the sidewalk of our 84 frequented street, she accidentally came in contact—100 (this shows that she came in close contact)—with a 78 fat, but 87 good-humored looking gentleman, who was 93 (*i. e.*, intently) gazing into the window of a toy-shop. Gracefully 56 extricating herself, she received the excuses of the 96 embarrassed Falstaff with a 68 bland smile, and continued on her way. But hardly—7—had she reached the corner of the block, ere she was overtaken by a 24 young man, 82 poorly dressed, but of an 85 expression of countenance; 91 hastily touching her 54 beautifully rounded arm, he said, to her 67 surprise—

“Madam, at the window of the toy-shop yonder you dropped this bracelet, which I had the 71 good fortune to observe, and now have the 94 happiness to hand to you.” (Of course the expression “94 happiness” is merely the young man’s polite hyperbole.)

Blushing with 76 modesty, the lovely (76, as before, of course) lady took the bracelet—which was a 24 magnificent diamond clasp (24 *magnificent*, playfully sarcastic; it was probably *not* one of Tucker’s)—from the young man’s hand, and 84 hesitatingly drew from her beautifully 88 embroidered reticule a 67 portemonnaie. The young man noticed the action, and 78 proudly drawing back, added—

“Do not thank me; the pleasure of gazing for an instant at those 100 eyes (perhaps

too exaggerated a compliment) has already more than compensated me for any trouble that I might have had."

She thanked him, however, and with a 67 blush and a 48 pensive air, turned from him, and pursued with a 83 slow step her promenade.—*A New System of English Grammar.*

(*a*) **Cardinals** are used of groups, and show the size of the group; as, Three men; 365 days.

**Obs. 19.**—IN WRITING NUMBERS, round sums are usually spelled out, as are numbers smaller than one hundred. But where statistics are given, figures should be used, however small the number may be. Sums of money should usually be expressed in figures where both dollars and cents are to be expressed.

**NOTE III.**—Numbers above one thousand, except in dates, are commonly divided by commas into periods of three figures each. Thus, \$2,467.89; 34,586,709. See also page 259.

**Obs. 20.**—COLLECTIVE WORDS, like *couple*, *dozen*, etc., should be used to express number only when the objects enumerated are grouped in couples, dozens, etc.

**EXERCISE XIII.**—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—Two days after. (If it is desirable to retain the air of indefiniteness that belongs to "a couple of days after," but is lost in the precision of "two days after," we may say, "a day or two after," or "some two or three days after.")

A couple of days after.—THACKERAY. I have another with a couple of hundred Continentals behind him.—THACKERAY. Wanted three or four dozen females to make match-boxes.

(*β*) **Ordinals** are used of individuals, and show the position of the individual in the group; as, The third man, The 365th day.

**Obs. 21.**—The *th* that denotes the ordinal should be placed at the end of the entire number; thus:

The *Erening Telegram* says: "The Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, of Elmira, preached his seventeenth hundred sermon on Sunday

morning." The *Telegram* should explain what a "hundred sermon" is, and why Mr. Beecher has preached seventeen of them.

**Obs. 22.**—USAGE DIFFERS as to whether a numeral following a noun is to be considered a cardinal or an ordinal.

Thus we may write either Sept. 3, or Sept. 3d ; Part Two, or Part Second.

(2) **Possessives** denote possession, or some kindred connection.

For punctuation, see page 259.

The truth is that the English case in *s* has not only the possessive use of the Anglo-Saxon genitive, but the other cases which stand nearest to this. Thus it is constantly employed to denote connection in family, or state, or society : as in *John's brother*, *Henry's neighbor*, *England's queen*, *the king's enemies*—in old English we find even *the king's traitors*. Mr. Manning might perhaps argue that to say *the king's enemies* implies that "the king *has* enemies," and expresses therefore a possessive relation. But the verb *have* is a word of very general meaning, which can be used in a multitude of cases where there is no possession, properly so called, and sometimes even where our possessive case would be inadmissible. Thus, every apple *has* a half, but we cannot say *every apple's half*. Still farther our case in *s* is used to express the subject of an action or attribute : as in *coward's fear*, *God's love*, *the prisoner's being absent*. But relations which stand at a wider distance from the possessive cannot be expressed in this way. Thus, the objective relation : we do not say *God's fear*, but *the fear of God* ; not *the child's guardianship*, but *the guardianship of the child*. We do indeed say *England's ruler*, *the child's guardian* ; but here it is political or social connection that is thought of, and not the object of the action. In like manner our case in *s* cannot be used as a genitive partitive (not *women's loveliest*, but *loveliest of women*) ; nor as a genitive of material (not *leather's girdle*, but *girdle of leather*) ; nor as a genitive of designation (not *Italy's kingdom*, but *kingdom of Italy*).—JAMES HADLEY.

**Obs. 23.**—The **Objective Genitive**, or the relation of the possessive to its noun as the object of the action implied in the noun, not being permitted in English, such expressions as "In our midst," for "In the midst of us," must be carefully avoided.

An attorney not celebrated for his probity was robbed one night on his way from Wicklow to Dublin. His father, meeting Baron O'Grady next day, said : "My lord, have you heard of my *son's* robbery?" "No, indeed," replied the Baron ; "pray whom did he rob?"—HODGSON.

**Obs. 24.—A Relation of Persons.**—"Another rule is to avoid converting mere abstractions into persons. I believe you will very rarely find in any great writer before the Revolution the possessive case of an inanimate noun used in prose instead of the dependent case, as, 'the watch's hand,' for 'the hand of a watch.' The possessive or Saxon genitive was confined to persons, or at least to animated subjects."—COLERIDGE.

In modern English the inflected possessive of nouns expresses almost exclusively the notion of property or appurtenance. Hence we say *a man's hat*, or *a man's hand*, but the *description of a man*, not *a man's description*. And of course we generally limit the application of this form to words which indicate objects capable of possessing or enjoying the right of property: in a word, to persons, or at least animated and conscious creatures, and we accordingly speak of *a woman's bonnet*, but not of *a house's roof*.—MARSH.

**Obs. 25.—Whose** as the possessive of *which* (neuter) is therefore subject to criticism.

The author asks credit for his having here and elsewhere resisted the temptation of substituting "*whose*" for "*of which*"—the misuse of the said pronoun relative "*whose*," where the antecedent neither is nor is meant to be represented as either personal or even animal, he would brand as one among the worst of the mimicries of poetic diction, by which imbecile writers fancy they elevate their prose—*would* but that to his vexation he meets with it of late in the compositions of men that least of all need such artifices, and who ought to watch over the purity and privileges of their mother tongue with all the jealousy of high priests set apart by nature for the pontificate. Poor as our language is in terminations and inflections significant of the genders, to destroy the few it possesses is most wrongful.—COLERIDGE.

At present the use of *whose*, the possessive of *who*, is pretty generally confined to persons or things personified, and we should scruple to say, "I passed a house whose windows were open."—MARSH.

Yet in "Man and Nature" Mr. Marsh writes, "a quadrangular pyramid, the perpendicular of whose sides" (p. 145).

Campbell says:

The possessive of *who* is properly *whose*; the pronoun *which*, originally indeclinable, had no possessive. This want was supplied in the common periphrastic manner, by the help of the preposition and the article. But as this could not fail to enfeeble the expression, when so much time was given to mere conjunctives, all our best authors, both in prose and in verse, have come now regularly to adopt in such cases the possessive of *who*; and thus have substituted one syllable in the place of three, as in the example following: "Philosophy, *whose* end is to instruct us in the knowledge of nature," for, "Philosophy, *the end of which* is to instruct us."—*Rhetoric*, ii. 375.

**Its** has a curious history, showing the prejudice that had to be overcome in establishing a neuter possessive.

In Anglo-Saxon the personal pronoun represented in English by *he, she, it*, made the genitive or possessive *his* for the masculine and neuter gender, *her* (hire) for the feminine, and so long as grammatical gender had not an invariable relation to sex, the employment of a common form for the masculine and neuter excited no feeling of incongruity. The change in the grammatical significance of gender suggested the same embarrassment with relation to the universal application of *his* as of *whose*, and when this was brought into distinct consciousness a remedy was provided. At first, *it* was used as a possessive, without inflection or a preposition, and several instances of this occur in Shakespeare, as also in Leviticus xxv. 5, of the Bible of 1611: "That which groweth of it own accord." *Its*, although to be found in printed books of a somewhat earlier date, is not once used in that edition, *his* being in all cases but that just cited employed instead. The precise date and occasion of the first introduction of *its* is not ascertained, but it could not have been far from the year 1600.

For a considerable period about the beginning of the seventeenth century, there was evidently a sense of incongruity in the application of *his* to objects incapable of the distinction of sex, and at the same time a reluctance to sanction the introduction of the new form *its* as a substitute. Accordingly, for the first half of that century many of the best writers rejected them both, and I think English folios can be found which do not contain an example of either. *Of it, thereof*, and longer circumlocutions were preferred, or the very idea of the possessive relation was avoided altogether. . . .

Fuller has *its* in some of his works, in others he rejects it, and in the Pisgah Sight of Palestine, printed in 1650, both forms are sometimes applied to a neuter noun in the course of a single sentence: as, "Whether from the violence of winds, then blowing on *its* stream, and angering it beyond *his* banks."—MARSH.



**Obs. 26.**—Wherever ambiguity, or awkwardness, would result from the use of the apostrophe (see p. 259), it is best to avoid the use of the possessive altogether. Thus, instead of "The bracelet was Carlotta's, the empress," we may say: "The bracelet was that of Carlotta, the empress."

This principle of avoidance is of wide application and very great usefulness. The trained writer will often find that he cannot well handle the form of expression which first occurred to him; and, being fertile in rhetorical expedients, will substitute for it an entirely different form, while the novice will waste time in vain attempts to make the original form graceful and appropriate.

Much of the value of sound rhetorical instruction consists in the suggestion and exemplification of alternative forms of expression of which we may avail ourselves in an emergency.—GILMORE.

**Obs. 27.**—Care must be taken not to put before a possessive an adjective belonging to the thing possessed.

Thus, not, Red children's stockings, but, Children's red stockings; not, The familiar postman's knock, but, The postman's familiar knock.

*Compare:* Even the philosophers sometimes have the laugh turned on them. Not long since, in the presence of Herbert Spencer, a little boy said: "What an awful lot of crows!" The philosopher corrected the youth by saying, "I have yet to learn, little master, that there is anything to inspire awe in such a bird as the crow." For once the author of "First Principles" had met his match. The boy replied, "But I didn't say there was; I didn't say what a lot of awful crows, but what an awful lot of crows!" Sound, for the boy.—*Hurper's Weekly.*

**EXERCISE XIV.**—In the following sentences change the possessives to prepositional phrases, and the prepositional phrases to possessives.

*Example.*—If we cannot perceive the manner of the poison of sin, no wonder if we cannot perceive the method of the antidote of grace.

If we cannot perceive the manner of sin's poison, no wonder if we cannot perceive the method of grace's antidote.—T. FULLER.

A Connecticut newspaper announces that "the barn and contents of Mr. Giles Potter of Essex was burned Thursday night."

The young man did not want natural talents ; but the father *of him* was a coxcomb, who affected being a fine gentleman so unmercifully that he could not endure in his sight, or the frequent mention of one who was his son growing into manhood and thrusting him out of the gay world.—CAMPBELL.

(3) **Appositives** result by condensation from descriptive clauses. Thus :

*John Adams, the President, is a shorter form for, John Adams, who was the President.*

**Obs. 28.**—Apposition may be so used as to convert two sentences into one. Thus :

We called at the house of a person to whom we had letters of introduction, *a musician*, and, what is more, *a good friend to all young students of music.*—ABBOTT.

This is as clear as, He was a musician, etc., and is briefer.

It would, however, be better to put a dash before "a musician." See page 271.

**Obs. 29.**—Appositives should be placed near the nouns that they define.

EXERCISE XV.—Correct the arrangement of the following sentences.

*Example.*—Charles I., the king of England, was beheaded by Cromwell.

Charles I. was beheaded by Cromwell, the king of England.

Tom Thumb was exhibited by Barnum, the smallest man living.

Dr. Kane deserves to rank with Livingston, the arctic explorer.

The horse was scared by a snail, a nervous creature.

The shawl was worn by the governor's wife, made of camel's hair.

(4) **Participles** take the place of the subject and the predicate of a modifying clause, and often of the connective, thus promoting brevity, but endangering precision.

**Obs. 30.**—The participle should be so placed that the word it modifies be unmistakable.

EXERCISE XVI.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—Entering so suddenly, I did not hear what you said. Or, if the other be the meaning, What you said on entering so suddenly, I did not hear.

I did not hear what you said entering so suddenly.

I saw an old school-fellow yesterday, when I was in New York, walking down Broadway.

The deceased came to his death by excessive drinking producing apoplexy in the minds of the jury.

The jury rendered a verdict of death from suicide while laboring under insanity.

The Gleaner is one of the finest and fastest boats on the Tyne. Her accommodations are in every respect good and comfortable, and her crew skilful, steady, and obliging, being newly painted and decorated for pleasure trips.

Sir Charles Wetherell addressed the House for three hours . . . when, being fatigued by his exertions, their lordships adjourned to the following day.—*British Almanac*, 1836.

In an old description of Albany, it is said, "The place contains some two or three hundred houses and twenty-five hundred inhabitants, all standing with their gable ends to the street."

With this small force the general determined to attack the foe, flushed with recent victory, and rendered negligent by success.

Adam, first of men,  
To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech  
Turned him.—MILTON.

Especial care should be taken not to omit the subject of the participle.

The admiral was called upon to say whether he recognized in the body present the corpse of the Emperor Maximilian. . . .

Replying in the affirmative, the coffin was again closed.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

Being early killed, I sent a party in search of his mangled body.—*Rough Notes of an Old Soldier*.

(Compare, If dead, his wife or children may apply.)

In the *Morning Chronicle's* account of Lord Macaulay's funeral occurred the following sentence :

When placed upon the ropes over the grave, and while being gradually lowered into the earth, the organ again pealed forth.—ALFORD.

Find other illustrations on pages 294, 295.

**Obs. 31.**—The participial phrase should be resolved into a clause when the context leaves it doubtful whether the relation be *when*, *while*, *though*, *that*, or *because*.

Abbott remarks of "Men walking on ice sometimes fall : " it is better to use "men walking" to mean "men *when* they walk." If the relative is meant, use "men that walk" instead of the participle.

(1) <i>While</i> he was	}	walking on	{	(1) the road	}	he fell.
(2) <i>Because</i> he was	}		{	(2) the ice	}	

When the participle precedes the subject, it generally implies a cause : "Seeing this, he retired." Otherwise it generally has its proper participial meaning, *e.g.*, "He retired, *keeping* his face toward us." If there is any ambiguity, write "*on seeing*," "*at the same time*," or "*while keeping*."

(1) <i>Though</i> he was	}	struck with terror	}	(1) he nevertheless stood his ground.
(2) <i>Since</i> he was				(2) he rapidly retreated.
(3) <i>If</i> he is				(3) he will soon retreat.

"Deserted by his friends, he was forced to have recourse to those who had been his enemies." Here, if we write, "He, deserted by his friends, was forced," etc., *he* is unduly emphasized ; and if we write, "He was forced to have recourse to his enemies, having been deserted by his friends," the effect is very flat.

Of course we might sometimes write, "He was deserted and forced," etc. But this cannot be done where the "desertion" is to be not stated but implied.

**Obs. 32.**—The participle *being* is often omitted ; as,

France at our doors, he sees no danger nigh, for, France *being* at our doors, etc.

(5) **Infinitives** used as adjective modifiers are in the form of appositives; as, The best course—to treat him kindly—occurred to me.

He replied by a persistent refusal to enter his service.

He gave me advice how to behave.

An invitation to pass the summer.

It is to be noted in passing, that the English infinitive corresponds not only to the A.-S. infinitive, but also to the A.-S. gerund. The A.-S. infinitive was characterized by no separate sign, but by the termination *-an*. For example, *luf-i-an*, to love. The A.-S. gerund was a verbal noun ending in *-anne* or *enne*, and invariably preceded by the preposition *tó*. For example, *tó lufigenne*, for loving. These two forms were practically confounded through the influence of the Norman conquest—the terminations being dropped, and the sign *tó* indifferently prefixed both to the infinitive and the gerund. Hence, in many cases, what we now regard as an infinitive might, properly, be regarded as a relic of the A.-S. gerund. For example, "He is to blame," means, "He is for blaming," and need not be corrected into, "He is to be blamed." So also, "A house to let."—GILMORE.

(6) **Preposition Phrases** may be used to express almost every sort of relation.

**Obs. 33.**—Care must be taken to employ the preposition fixed upon by usage as appropriate to express a certain relation.

Usage, and that alone, determines our choice of prepositions; and in language usage is perpetually changing. *Influence into*, *contemporary to*, and *independent upon*, once were good English; and such *synonymous to* has been within the last hundred years. To sympathize *in* the misfortunes of another does not appear to us a whit stranger than it appeared in the days of Shenstone; any sympathy *in* her general principles was the expression preferred by Coleridge in 1800; and sympathies *toward* may claim the sanction

of Landor. Sympathy *for* has the consentient authority of Sterne, Gray, Burke, etc.—FITZEDWARD HALL.

An educational journal thus describes the trouble a Frenchman had with the verb "break."

"I begin to understand your language better," said my French friend, Mr. Dubois, to me, "but your verbs trouble me still; you mix them up so with prepositions."

"I am sorry you find them troublesome," was all I could say.

"I saw your friend Mrs. Murkeson, just now," he continued. "She says she intends to break down house-keeping; am I right there?"

"Break up house-keeping, she must have said."

"Oh, yes, I remember; break up house-keeping."

"Why does she do that?" I asked.

"Because her health is broken into."

"Broken down."

"Broken down? Oh, yes. And, indeed, since the small-pox has broken up in our city——"

"Broken out."

"She thinks she will leave it for a few weeks."

"Will she leave the house alone?"

"No, she is afraid it will be broken—broken—how do I say that?"

"Broken into."

"Certainly, it is what I meant to say."

"Is her son to be married soon?"

"No, that engagement is broken—broken——"

"Broken off."

"Yes, broken off."

"Ah, I had not heard of that."

"She is very sorry about it. Her son only broke the news down to her last week. Am I right? I am anxious to speak English well."

"He merely broke the news; no preposition this time."

"It is hard to understand. That young man, her son, is a fine young fellow; a breaker, I think."

"A broker, and a very fine young fellow. Good-day."

So much for the verb "to break."

A country editor, referring to visiting a family who gave him a meal, said: "We are indebted to Mr. and Mrs. ——, with whom we should be pleased for further acquaintance." This is about on a par with the young orator in a country debating club, who said: "Mr. Chairman, every community is divided into two classes—the educated and the uneducated—one of whom I am which."

**Appropriate Prepositions.**—The following list includes most of the phrases in which prepositions are commonly misused. It is made up from the tables in

Worcester's Dictionary (pages xl., xli.), Angus's "Hand-book of the English Tongue" (pages 325, 326). and Campbell's "Hand-book of Synonyms and Prepositions" (pages 141-153). The last is especially recommended to those who would be exact in their use of prepositions, as it gives a multitude of quotations, illustrating the nicer distinctions.

abhorrence of.  
 abhorrent to.  
 abound in, with.  
 absolve from.  
 accede to.  
 accept (of).  
 accommodate to (of things).  
     with (of persons).  
 accompanied by, with.  
 accord with (neuter).  
     to (transitive).  
 accordance with.  
 according to.  
 accuse of.  
 acquaint with.  
 acquiesce in.  
 acquit of.  
 adapted to, for.  
 adequate to.  
 adhere to.  
 admission to, into.  
 admit to, into.  
     (of).  
 advantage of, over.  
 advocate of, for.  
 affinity to, with, between.  
 agree with (a person).  
     to (a proposal).  
     upon (conditions).  
     in (thinking).  
     among (themselves).  
 agreeable to.  
 alien from, to.  
 allied to, with.  
 alter from, to, into.  
 alteration in.  
 ambitious of.  
 amuse with, at.  
 analogous to.  
 analogy between, to, with.  
 angry with (a person).  
     at (a thing).  
 antagonistic to.  
 antagonism to, between.  
 antipathy to, against.  
 anxious for, about.  
 applicable to.  
 appoint to, over.  
 apprehensive of.  
 appropriate to.  
 approve (of).

argue with, against.  
 array with, in.  
 arrive at, in, from.  
 ascertain from.  
 ask of (a person).  
     for (a thing).  
     after (to inquire).  
 aspire to, after.  
 assent to.  
 assimilate to.  
 astonished at.  
 attend to (listen).  
     upon (wait).  
 attended by, with, to, on.  
 avail one's self of.  
 avenge one's self on.  
 averse to.  
 banish from.  
 base on, upon.  
 believe in, on.  
 bestow upon.  
 bound for.  
 brag of.  
 bump against.  
 burn up, down, out, with.  
 capable of.  
 call on (a person).  
     at (a house).  
     in (question).  
     after, by (name).  
 care for, about, of.  
 careful of, in.  
 caution against (calamity).  
     in (action).  
 celebrated for.  
 certain of.  
 change for, with, to, into, from.  
 charge (a crime) on, against (one).  
     (once) with (a crime).  
     (a trust) to (one).  
 cheat of, out of, with, by.  
 clear of (harm).  
     from (guilt).  
 coincide with.  
 collide with.  
 combine with, into.  
 common to, with,

communicate to (transitive).  
     with (intransitive).  
 compare with (for judgment).  
     to (for illustration).  
 comparison with, between.  
 compatible with.  
 complain of.  
 complaint against, of.  
 compliance with.  
 comply with.  
 composed of.  
 concerned at, for (a thing).  
     with (a person).  
     in (a proceeding).  
 concur with (a person).  
     in (an opinion).  
 condole with (a person).  
     for (a loss).  
 confide in (intransitive).  
     (a thing) to.  
 conform to.  
 conformable to.  
 conformity with, to.  
 congenial to.  
 congratulate upon.  
 connect with, to.  
 connive with (a person).  
     at (a thing).  
 consist of, in (substance).  
     with (harmony).  
 consistent with, in.  
 consider (of).  
 consonant to, with.  
 contend with (a person).  
     for (a principle, object).  
     against (an obstacle).  
 contiguous to.  
 contradictory to.  
 contrary to.  
 contrast with, to, between.  
 controversy with (a person).  
     about (a matter).  
 convenient to, for.  
 conversant with, in, about.  
 convert into.  
 convict of.  
 copy after (an example).

copy from (nature).  
 out of (a book).  
 correspond with, to.  
 with.  
 together, to.  
 covered by, with.  
 cure of.

danger of, from.  
 dated at, from.  
 deal with, by.  
 defend from, against.  
 deference to, for, toward.  
 deficient in.  
 delighted by, at, with, in.  
 deliver from, out of (trouble).  
 over (a package).  
 demand of, from.  
 denounce upon, against.  
 depend upon.  
 dependent on.  
 deprive of.  
 derogate from.  
 derogation to, from, of.  
 derogatory to.  
 deserve of, from (a person).  
 desire for, of, after.  
 desirous of.  
 desist from.  
 devolve on.  
 die of, with, from, by.  
 differ among (themselves).  
 from (one another).  
 with (in opinion).  
 about, concerning (a question).  
 difference with (a person).  
 between (objects).  
 different from.  
 difficulty in.  
 dilate upon.  
 diminution of.  
 direct to, toward.  
 disagree with (a person).  
 to (a proposition).  
 disagreeable to.  
 disappointed of (something not got).  
 in (something got).

disapprove (of).  
 discontented with.  
 discourage from.  
 discouragement to.  
 discriminate between (two things).  
 (one) from (another).

disdain for.  
 disengaged from.  
 disgusted with (a person).  
 with, at, by (a thing).

dislike to, of.  
 disqualify for, from.  
 dissent from.  
 dissuade from.  
 distinguished by, for, from.  
 distinction from.  
 divest of.  
 divide between (two).  
 among (several).  
 into (parts).  
 due from, to.

cager in, for, after.  
 earnest in, for.  
 embark in.  
 embellished by, with.  
 employ in, on, about.  
 enamored of, with.  
 encounter (with).  
 encouragement to.  
 encroach on.  
 endeavor after.  
 engage in.  
 engrave on, in.  
 enjoin upon, to.  
 enrage with, at, against.  
 enrich by, with.  
 enter in, into, upon.  
 entertain by, with.  
 entrance into.  
 envious of, against, at.  
 environ with.  
 envy at, of.  
 equal to, with.  
 equally with.  
 equivalent to.  
 escape from, out of.  
 espouse to.  
 example to, for.  
 exasperate at (an act),  
 against (a person).  
 except from.  
 exception to.  
 exclude from.  
 exclusive of.  
 exhausted by, with.  
 exonerate from.  
 expect from, of.  
 expel from, out of.  
 expert in, at.  
 expose to.  
 for (sale).  
 expostulate with.  
 exult over.

fall under (observation).  
 into (difficulties).  
 upon (enemies).  
 to, on (the ground).  
 familiar to, with.  
 favorable for, to.  
 favorite of, with.  
 filled with.  
 followed by.  
 forbear from.

foreign to, from.  
 formed of, from.  
 found upon.  
 in (truth).  
 free from, with.  
 friendly to, with.  
 frightened at.  
 frown at, on.  
 frugal of.  
 fruitful in, of.  
 full of.

glad of, at.  
 glance at, upon.  
 good at, for, to, toward.  
 graduate at, in.  
 graduated from.  
 graft upon, in, into.  
 grapple with.  
 grateful to (a person).  
 for (a thing).  
 greedy of, after.  
 grieve at, for.  
 guilty of.

hanker after, for.  
 happen to, upon.  
 harass by, with.  
 hatred to, of.  
 healed of.  
 hinder from.  
 hold of, on.  
 hunger for, after.

ill of.  
 illustrated by, with.  
 immersed in.  
 impatient with (a person).  
 at (his conduct).  
 of (restraint).  
 for (something wanted).  
 under (misfortune).

impose upon.  
 impress upon, with, by.  
 imprint upon.  
 incapacitate by, from.  
 incensed with, against.  
 incentive to.  
 include in.  
 incompatible with.  
 incorporate into, with.  
 incumbent upon.  
 independent of.  
 indifferent to.  
 indispensable to.  
 indulge with, in.  
 indulgent to, of.  
 infer from.  
 inferior to.  
 influence with, over.  
 inform of, about, concerning.



initiate into.  
 inquire of, for, after, about,  
 concerning into.  
 inquiry into.  
 insensible to, of.  
 inseparable from.  
 insert in, into.  
 insight into.  
 insinuate into, through, to.  
 inspection into, over.  
 intent on.  
 interfere with, in, between.  
 intersperse among, through,  
 with.  
 intervene between.  
 introduce to (a person).  
 into (a place).  
 intrude upon (a person).  
 into (a place).  
 intrust to, with.  
 insure to.  
 invest with.  
 involve in.  
 irritated by, against (a per-  
 son).  
 by, at (a thing).  
 issue from, out of.

join to, with.

killed by (an enemy).  
 with (fatigue).  
 know about, of.

lean against, upon, to.  
 liberal of, in.  
 listen for, to.  
 live at (a village).  
 in (a city, country).  
 on (the earth).  
 upon (food).  
 long for, after.  
 look for, after, upon.  
 into, in.  
 love of, for, to.

make of, from, out of, with,  
 for.  
 marry to.  
 martyr for, to.  
 mastery over, of.  
 matter with.  
 meddle with, in.  
 mindful of.  
 mix with, in.  
 model after, on, in.  
 mortified with, at.  
 mourn for, over.

name after, from.  
 necessary to, for.  
 necessity for, of.  
 need of.

object to.  
 objection to, against.  
 oblivious of.  
 obnoxious to.  
 observance of.  
 obtain from, of.  
 occasion for, of.  
 occupy by, with, in.  
 offended with, by, at.  
 opinion on, about.  
 opportunity of, for.  
 offended with, by, at.  
 opinion on, about.  
 opportunity of, for.  
 opposite (to).  
 opposition to.  
 originate in, from.  
 overwhelm with, by, in.

parallel to, with.  
 part from, with.  
 partake (of).  
 partial to, toward.  
 partiality to, for.  
 participate in.  
 patient of, with, toward,  
 under.  
 peculiar to.  
 pendent from.  
 penetrate into, within, to.  
 perish of, by.  
 persevere in.  
 pity on.  
 pleased with, at.  
 possessed of, with, by.  
 predisposed to, toward.  
 prefer to, before, above.  
 preferable to.  
 preference to, before, over,  
 above, for.  
 prefix to.  
 prejudice against.  
 prejudicial to.  
 present to, with.  
 preside over.  
 prevail upon, with, over,  
 against.  
 prevent from.  
 productive of.  
 profitable to, for.  
 prohibit from.  
 prolific of.  
 proper to.  
 proportion to.  
 protect from, against.  
 provide with, for, against.  
 punish with, by, for.  
 purge from, of.  
 pursuance of.  
 put into, in.

rail at, against.  
 read in, out of, from, over.  
 receive of, from.  
 recite out of, from.

reckon upon.  
 recline upon.  
 reconcile to, with.  
 recover from.  
 recraent to.  
 reduce to, under.  
 regard for, to.  
 regret for.  
 rejoice at, in.  
 relieve from, of.  
 relish for, of.  
 rely upon.  
 remark upon.  
 remedy for, against.  
 remonstrate with, against.  
 repeat (a passage) of, from,  
 out of.  
 repent of.  
 repine at, for.  
 replete with.  
 requisite for, to.  
 reproach with, for.  
 research into.  
 resemblance to.  
 reside at, in.  
 resolve upon.  
 respect for, to.  
 reward with, by, for.  
 rich in.

sail for, to.  
 sated with.  
 satisfy with.  
 search for, after, into, out.  
 secure of, from, against.  
 seek for, after.  
 seized by, with.  
 sell for, by (auction) in Eng-  
 land.  
 at, in United States.

share in, of.  
 sick of, with.  
 similar to.  
 similarity to, between, of.  
 situated on (this side).  
 in (Main Street).  
 skilful in, of, at.  
 smile at, upon.  
 solicitous about, for.  
 speak to, with, about, upon.  
 strive with, against, for.  
 sufficient for.  
 suitable to, for.  
 suited to, with.  
 surprised at, by, with.  
 surrounded by, with.  
 swerve from.  
 sympathize with, in.  
 sympathy with, for, between.

taste of, for.  
 thick with.  
 think of, about, on.  
 thirst for, after.  
 threaten by, with.

tire with, of, by.  
translate from, out of, into.  
treat of.  
trust in, to.

unison with.  
unite to, with, in, by.  
unworthy of.

variance with.  
versed in.  
vest in, with.  
vexed with, at.  
view of, to.

wait upon, for.  
want of, with.

weary of, with, in.  
worthy of.  
write from, down, out.

yearn for, after, toward.  
yoke with.

zealous for, in.

The mistakes of most frequent occurrence in this connection consist in making one preposition the complement of two different or contrasted words. Thus: He was a man with whom he agreed on a few subjects but [from whom he] differed on many.

EXERCISE XVII.—Replace the prepositions in the following sentences by those appropriate:

*Example.*—It is abhorrent to my instincts.

It is abhorrent from my instincts. He accused me with falsehood. He is acquitted from suspicion. What advantage is it, above being recognized? The wagon collided against the car. It was in compliance to my request. In compliance of your message I have come to see you. This is different to that. He argued differently than I. He disagreed from the report. They dissented to the plan. He took exception from the remark. Why take exception at a hasty word? It is incompatible from my principles. He is independent from the society. These apples are inferior than the last. The thought is inseparable to the proposal. What is the matter of the cat? He was named George for me. There is need for more money. Do you object against him? I have no prejudice to him. I rely in you. It has great similarity with his former book. The house is on the principal street. He is zealous of good works.

I: any fault can be found to his admirable eloquence, it is that he sometimes borders on the hard and dry.—BLAIR.

**Obs. 34.**—Beware of omitting necessary prepositions, and of inserting them needlessly.

EXERCISE XVIII.—Remove or insert prepositions as required in the following sentences.

*Example.*—We entreat thee to hear us. She is at home.

We entreat of thee to hear us. She is home [an exasperating vulgarity]. His servants ye are to whom ye obey. It is worthy your notice. Notwithstanding of the numerous panegyrics on ancient English liberty.—HUME.

Continuing your remarks on my criticisms, you say :

It must require, to speak in the genteel language which some of my correspondents uphold, a most abnormal elongation of the auricular appendages, for a reader to have suggested to his mind a fall from the sublime height of ignorance down into the depth of a mistake.

I spoke of editors falling *into* mistakes : it remained for the Dean of Canterbury to add that they fell *down* into the *depth* of a mistake. You say you do not write for idiots ; who else would imagine it were possible to fall *up* into a depth ?—MOON.

**Obs. 35.**—The preposition must be repeated when the second of two connected nouns refers to an object not closely associated with the first, especially a contrasted object. (See Obs. 9, page-xxxv.)

But obverse couples are to be regarded as forming one compound idea, unless there be specific separation. “The rule of right and wrong” is the correct way of stating the rule that settles what is right and what is wrong. So “a question of pleasure and pain,” “the theory of heat and cold,” etc. “By observation and experiment,” means the appeal to facts generally, as opposed to deductive inferences apart from facts. “By observation and by experiment” dissociates the two methods as different ways of arriving at truth.

<i>Referring to associated objects.</i>	<i>Referring to disassociated objects.</i>
Two essays on Gold and Currency.	Two essays on Gold and on Currency.

(It is questionable whether so much ambiguity should be trusted to the preposition. Punctuation will easily remove it, as follows : *Two essays on “Gold and Currency,”* for the one meaning, and *Two essays, on Gold and on Currency,* or *on “Gold” and on “Currency,”* for the other. See pages 265, 270.)

Sincerity combines reality of conviction and earnestness of purpose with purity or freedom from unfairness or dishonesty.—C. J. SMITH.

So far as form is concerned, this may mean

- (1) with { purity  
or { freedom from unfairness  
or { dishonesty,

the three expressions being assumed to mean the same thing ; or

- (2) with { purity  
or { freedom from { unfairness  
or { dishonesty,

the members of each pair of expressions being assumed to mean the same thing.

The sentence should read :

Sincerity combines reality of conviction and earnestness of purpose with purity, or freedom from unfairness and from dishonesty.

**Obs. 36.**—The preposition should be repeated after an intervening conjunction, especially if a verb and object also intervene.

Thus, He forgets the gratitude that he owes to those that helped all his companions, and John Smith in particular. Is John Smith one of those to whom he owes gratitude, or one of his companions who was helped? If the former is the meaning, *to* should be repeated before John Smith.

**EXERCISE XIX.**—Insert prepositions where needed in the following sentences :

*Example.*—The Sabbath was regarded as a day for rest from worldly occupation and for holy joy.

The Sabbath was regarded as a day for rest from worldly occupation and holy joy.

He sympathized not with their cause, but their fate.—BULWER.

The bursting of the Mississippi Scheme and South-Sea bubble.

Wise women choose not husbands for the eye, merit, or birth, but wealth and sovereignty.—BEN JONSON.

Persons are prohibited from riding or driving cattle on the foot-path.

If we consider the works of nature and art.—ADDISON.

In the turn either of style or sentiment.—BLAIR.

I must observe at the same time that the constant indulgence of a declamatory manner is not favorable either to good composition or good delivery.—BLAIR.

The moulting season is a very interesting one, both for birds and [other] bipeds.—R. H. BARHAM.

**Obs. 37.**—Preposition phrases should stand in close connection with the words they limit.

The preposition phrase almost uniformly follows the noun, on the principle that "Easy adjuncts are placed first; long or complicated adjuncts come after the noun, which is not willing to be too much suspended." Our usage compares favorably with the German usage, which would strike us as intolerably clumsy. "*Ein durch Zufall von einem Unbekannten aus einer groszen Lebensgefahr geretteter Mann*" is, literally, "A *by accident by a stranger from imminent peril saved man*:" "A *man saved accidentally by a stranger from imminent peril.*" So, "*Dieser über alle Erwartung gelungene Erfolg*"—"This *beyond all expectation successful result*"—"This *result successful beyond all expectation*;" we might go as far as "This *surprisingly successful result.*"—BAIN.

Compare, *The, I believe of Eastern derivation, monosyllable Bosh.*—THACKERAY.

*Illustration.*—This idea was as sweet as the vision of a cool bath, in a marble tank, in a darkened chamber, in a hot land.—HENRY JAMES, JR.

*Exception.*—Dionysius of Halicarnassus has given us *upon the orations of Socrates, as also upon those of some other Greek orators, a full and regular treatise*, which is, in my opinion, one of the most judicious pieces of ancient criticism extant, and very worthy of being consulted.—BLAIR.

**EXERCISE XX.**—Correct the arrangement of phrases in the following sentences. (Also of those on pages 294, 295.)

*Example.*—A man with a Roman nose I saw digging a ditch.

I saw a man digging a ditch with a Roman nose.

She died in twenty-four hours of a hornet's sting.

I saw a wildcat shot by a little boy five feet eight inches long.

For sale. A splendid gray horse, calculated for a charger, or would accommodate a lady with three white feet.

To be sold cheap. A mail phaeton, the property of a gentleman with a movable head as good as new.

To be sold, an Erard grand piano, the property of a lady about to travel in a walnut case with carved legs.

One pound reward. Lost, a cameo brooch, representing Venus and Adonis on the Drumcondra road, about ten o'clock on Tuesday evening.

The advertiser having made an advantageous purchase offers for sale on very low terms about six dozen of prime port, lately the property of a gentleman about forty years of age, full in the body, and with a high bouquet.

A lady called from Australia to pay her compliments.

Some garments were made for the family of thick material.

A charitable lady will adopt a little boy with a small family.

A fellow was arrested with short hair.

A pearl was found by a sailor in a shell.

The house was built by a mason of brown stone.

Wanted, a room by two gentlemen thirty feet long and twenty wide.

Get for the motto, Unto us a child is born, ten feet long by three feet broad.

Upon which the Moor, seizing a bolster full of rage and jealousy, smothered the unhappy Desdemona.

**Obs. 38.**—The use of two or more prepositions with the same object should be avoided; as,

It is a mystery we firmly believe the truth of, and humbly adore the depth of.—BLAIR.

Reconstruct the sentence which violates this principle on page lv.

Another prevailing fashion, still somewhat new, but which has passed the stage of novelty, is the holding of one preposition in suspense for the introduction of another, so that both may apply to one object. One example—the following, from the London

*Spectator*—will be enough, for the construction is so common that it is not only found in almost all writing, but has invaded every-day speech.

He knows, further, that the keeper of the asylum has either been deceived by, or is an accomplice of, these doctors.

Now, the simple English construction in all such cases is, "Has either been deceived by these doctors, or is their accomplice," or "has either been deceived by these doctors, or is an accomplice of theirs." The attempt at elegance produces awkwardness. The leaving of words like *by, of, through, for, at, etc.*, which present no complete thought apart from an object, in the air like an unsupported wing of an army, is disastrous. But it has become the fashion, and is thought fine. This construction has one consequence which has a very bad effect—so bad that on that account only it should be condemned and abandoned. It throws emphasis upon the least important words in a sentence. It is almost impossible to read or to speak a sentence like that cited above without emphasizing it thus: "He knows further that the keeper of the asylum has either been deceived *by*, or is an accomplice *of*, these doctors," which is abominable and ridiculous.—R. G. WHITE.

**Obs. 39.**—"Splitting of particles" should be avoided, but not too rigorously.

Prepositions usually precede their objects, but when the object is a pronoun the preposition is frequently thrown forward to the end of the sentence; as, "A preposition is a poor word to end a sentence *with*." "A peg to hang a hat *on*."—THACKERAY.

"What a condition we have found you *in*." "He was the man they preferred to surrender themselves *to*."

It is sometimes a question whether the last word in a sentence should be a particle or a longer and more important word.

We may write (1), "These were the authorities [which] he referred *to* or commented *upon*," or (2) "These were the authorities *to which* he referred or *upon which* he commented;" (1) "Mr. James Mill was, I believe, the first who distinctly characterized the ambiguity, and pointed out how many errors in the received systems of philosophy it has had to *answer for*," or (2) "*for* how many errors . . . it has had to *answer*;" (1) "It is a funda-

mental principle in logic, that the power of forming classes is unlimited, as long as there is any (even the smallest) distinction to *found a difference upon*," or (2) "*upon which to found a difference*;" (1) "The progress of knowledge pointed out limits to them, or showed their truth to be contingent on some circumstance not originally attended to," or (2) "*to which attention was not originally paid*."

There are cases in which almost any good writer will unhesitatingly prefer, for its ease and often also for its brevity, the more informal structure, and others in which he will prefer the more stately one. The former is more idiomatic than the latter, and is, therefore, more frequent in conversation and in familiar letters than in books, and more frequent in Addison, Goldsmith, or Irving, than in Gibbon or Johnson. Neither form can be recommended as being the best absolutely and in all circumstances; for a practised writer will instinctively choose the form which belongs in the sentence in hand.—HILL.

There is another case for inversion, namely, in the Interrogative construction. The emphasis of interrogation requires us to begin a question with *Who, Whom, Which, What*, instead of allowing a preposition to precede. "*What* are we coming to?"—not "*To what* are we coming?" "*Who* or *whom* did you give it to?"—not "*To whom* did you give it?" To preface a question by a preposition, partly does away with the difference between the relative construction and the interrogative. .

Speaking of progress Mr. Disraeli put this interrogation—"Progress, from what to what?" we might say also, "Progress, what from and what to?" or "Progress, what from and to?" In the original form, "and" would possibly be an improvement; "Progress from what *and* to what?"

With *where* as an interrogative word, the preposition always follows: *whereto? wherefore?* This accustoms us to the more emphatic and less ambiguous form. *From whence* is not so good for interrogation as *where from*, or *whence?*—BAIN.

This "splitting of particles," as it has been called, is not ungrammatical, and is even conducive sometimes to exactness of expression; but it suspends the sense and directs attention to what are generally insignificant words. When the words are em-



phatic, and the intervening words are few, the construction may be allowed; *e.g.*, "Whether he is *for* or *against* us, I cannot tell."

Elegance prohibits an arrangement that throws the emphasis *on*, and thus causes a suspension of the sense *at*, a particle or other unimportant word (as in this very sentence).—HILL.

A preposition as such is by no means a feeble word. What can be finer than this from Rufus Choate? "What! Banish the Bible from our schools? Never, so long as there is left of Plymouth Rock a piece large enough to make a gunflint of!"—PHELPS.

EXERCISE XXI.—Change the position of the preposition in the following sentences:

*Example.*—It was a practice of which no one knew the origin.

It was a practice which no one knew the origin of.

That is the gentleman whom I am under obligations to.

When we met you, whom were you in company with?

Scott is an author whom every one is delighted with.

From what has been stated, the reader will understand something of the subject which I am to enter upon.

Logic is a study which few derive real benefit from.

They glide away over the meadows in winter in sledges.

(7) **Adverbial Phrases** are also condensed clauses; as, The cathedral there is still unfinished.

Compare the use of adverbs before the noun, page xxxi.

(8) **Clauses** are treated under the head of Complex Sentences.

#### THE PREDICATE.

**The Predicate** of a simple sentence is or may be separated into two parts, one of which is the Copula (the asserting word), while the other is either (1) a Noun, (2) an Adjective, (3) an Adverb, (4) a Preposition Phrase, or (5) a Participle.

Thus, (1) And the earth was all rest and the air was all love.—SHELLEY.

- (2) Thou art alive still while thy book doth live,  
And we have wits to read, and praise to give.

—BEN JONSON, of Shakspeare.

- (3) 'Tis neither here nor there.—*Othello*.

- (4) He that complies against his will  
Is of the same opinion still.—*Hudibras*.

- (5) He is walking.

When the verb contains in one word both the copula and the thing asserted, it may easily be resolved. Thus, He sleeps—He is sleeping; He threw—He was throwing.

FUNDAMENTAL LAW.—*Every sentence must contain at least one independent Predicate.*

A form of words may contain several subjects and predicates, and yet not be a sentence; as, "That he had frequently visited the city in which he was born,"—which, though containing two distinct predicates, is not a sentence. The connective "that" implies the dependence of the clause it introduces upon some other clause, as "He said," "I have heard," "It is true." Hence the essential predicate must be *independent*.

EXERCISE XXII.—Complete such of the following expressions as are not sentences:

*Example.*—Here is a design which has never been completed.

A design which has never been completed.

The honor of having been the first to welcome His Royal Highness.

The author having suddenly died, and left his work unfinished.

No sooner was William seated on the throne, than seeming to have lost all his former popularity.

He is taller, stronger, wiser.

That the king was ignorant of the real circumstances; that he had not examined the warrant which he had signed, and was therefore not responsible for the proceeding.

The Prince, when he saw the hopelessness of his cause, turned and fled.

The artist being of opinion that a national recognition, through

...of the race  
having risen to great truths, have held them as  
their kind, and have borne witness to them amidst

Seeing that the varnish of power brings forth  
facts and the beauties of the human portrait.

How much less in them that dwell in hous  
foundation is in the dust.

**EXERCISE XXIII.**—Complete the followin  
finding four appropriate predicates to each.

*Example.*—The snow flies; The snow falls; Th  
The snow blankets the earth.

**NOTE IV.**—*Proper names and words derived from  
capitals.*

Point out the proper names on page 219.

The snow—. The sea—. The tide—. The  
tress—. The enemy—. The prisoners—. The le  
fenders—. The bells—. All men—. The earth its  
scholars—. Men of wisdom—. Sounds of musi  
want of success—. No opportunity of doing good  
of the community—. The leader of the rebellion  
expected friends—. The source of the Nile—.  
of Central Africa—. A great number of vessels,  
stand the fury of the storm—. Many of the descri  
lers—. The veteran warrior, rushing into the midst  
The errors of previous generations—.

Thus, As it *does* not only, like other pictures, *give* the color and figure, but the motions of things it represents.—ADDISON.

**PROPER USE.**—*Do* and *did*, as the signs of the tenses, are frequently necessary, and sometimes emphatical. The idiom of the language renders them for the most part necessary in negation and interrogation; and even in affirmation they are found in certain circumstances to give emphasis to the expression. For instance, “Did I object to this measure formerly? I do object to it still.” Or, “What I did publicly affirm then, I do affirm now, and I will affirm always.” The contrast of the different tenses in these examples is more precisely marked by such monosyllables as are intended singly to point out that circumstance, than they can be by the bare inflections of the verb.—CAMPBELL.

Thus, No man is so positive in his prejudices against that of which he knows little, as the man who is master of a certain domain of knowledge, and therefore assumes to measure and judge that which he *does not* by that which he *does* fully know.—PORTER.

**Obs. 41.**—The uses of **Shall** and **Will** must be discriminated.

(a) IN AFFIRMATIVE SENTENCES there are two distinct future tenses, as follows :

<i>Future of Expectation.</i>		<i>Future of Determination.</i>	
I shall go,	We shall go.	I will go,	We will go.
Thou wilt go,	You will go.	Thou shalt go,	You shall go.
He will go,	They will go.	He shall go,	They shall go.

Thus, “I shall be drowned; nobody will help me,” is the despairing cry of a man who expects to drown; “I will be drowned; nobody shall help me,” is the cry of a man determined to drown.

The radical signification of *will* (Anglo-Saxon *willan*) is purpose, intention, determination; that of *shall* (Anglo-Saxon *scéal*, ought) is obligation. *I will do* means, I purpose doing—I am determined to do. *I shall do* means, radically, I ought to do; and as a man is supposed to do what he sees he ought to do, *I shall do* came to mean, I am about doing—to be, in fact, a mere announcement of future action, more or less remote. But so *you shall do* means, radically, you ought to do; and therefore unless we mean to impose an obligation or to announce an action on the part of an-

will ; and, in declaring purpose on our own part, another, obligation, or inevitable action, which we control, we say, *I or we will, you, he, or they shall*. which are in the form *you will*, are but a seeming of this rule of speech, which they, in fact, illustrate the courtesy of superior to subordinate, carried even in giving command, avoids the semblance while it assumes obedience in its very language.—

Shall remain !

Hear you this Triton of the minnows? mark you  
His absolute shall?—*CORIOLANUS*.

This child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A lady of my own.

The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place

Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.—*WORDSWORTH*.

Then wilt thou not be loth  
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess  
A paradise within thee.—*MILTON*.

Shall I, wasting in despair,  
Die because a woman's fair? . . . .  
If she love me, then believe  
I will die ere she shall grieve.—*WITHERS*.

If she hate me, then believe  
She shall die ere . . . .

shall be glad to see you. He replies that he shall be happy to go. He promises me it will soon be ready to sail. We will never look on his like again. I fear that I will lose it. I hope that I will be well. I believe that I will catch cold. I hope I will not be missed. I fear we will have rain. I will enjoy the visit. (Compare "We *will* be satisfied," the cry of the Citizens to Brutus, meaning that they were determined to have satisfaction.) It is requested that no one will leave the room. I think I will be contented, but I don't know.

As, besides the general fault of prolixity and indistinctness, this sentence contains several inaccuracies, I *will* be obliged to enter into a minute discussion of its structure and parts.—BLAIR.

A young men's Institute for Discussion on Self-Improvement is reported in a Scottish provincial paper to have met and discussed the question, "*Shall* the material universe be destroyed?" —ALFORD.

I am not able to devote as much time and attention to other subjects as I will be under the necessity of doing next year.—CHALMERS.

I do not expect that any word of praise which this work may elicit shall ever be responded to by me.—*Vestiges of Creation*.

We know to what causes our past reverses have been owing, and we will have ourselves to blame if they are again incurred.—ALISON.

You must make haste and gather me all you can, and do it quickly, or I will and shall do without it.—JOHNSON.

But I will depend on your coming over with Mr. Whistler in the spring.—SHENSTONE.

(b) **In Interrogative Sentences**, the forms are :

*Future of Expectation.*

*Future of Determination.*

(Will I go?)	(Will we go?)	Shall I go?	Shall we go?
Shalt thou go?	Shall you go?	Wilt thou go?	Will you go?
Will he go?	Will they go?	Shall he go?	Shall they go?

IN INTERROGATION, the auxiliaries are ruled by the same principle. "Shall" expresses that the subject is under external influence; "will" implies that the action is entirely within the control of the subject.

... —: There is no pressure from other hand, "*Shall I?*" indicates that the speaker has the control,—in this instance, the control is vested in the first person. "If you should think fit not to do so, I will fall to me;" the action of the speaker is dependent upon the will of the second person. So, "*Shall I?*" simply that the speaker expresses the action of resting on the will or control of the second person.

Will you give thanks, sweet Kate? or else shall I?

"What shall we drink?" I submit my tea choice lies with you; yours is the determining voice.

"If we refuse, what shall we suffer?" Our fate will or determination; we are in your power.

"Shall I pour your honor out a glass of sack?"  
"Do, Trim," said my uncle Toby.—*STERNE*.

*Hamlet.* One word more, good lady.

*Queen.* What shall I do?

The *Queen* asks *Hamlet*,

What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me.

There is more than mere futurity here; the *Queen* asks *Hamlet* what his own will or resolution is. The *Queen's* fate is together dependent on *Hamlet*, who is addressed.

*Antony* says to the citizens,

Shall I descend? and will you stir me up?

Shall he expire,  
And unavenged ?

I put it to you ; whether he shall or shall not rests with you to decide.

Hector is gone :  
Who shall tell Priam so, or Hecuba ?  
What ! Shall an African, shall Juba's heir  
Reproach great Cato's son ?

*Futurity.*—Next as to the Interrogative form available for mere futurity. “Shall I?” is already set apart for the case where the first person acts under the control of the second person or person addressed. Still there is no other form for simple futurity with the first person as subject. “Will I?” is obviously impossible as a direct question ; yet it is the regular Scotch form.

For inquiring as to a future action on the part of the second person, we have to consider two forms. “*Shall* you?” would naturally inquire as to the influence of external circumstances upon “you ;” and, being not an affirmation but merely a question, it is not considered as at all uncourteous. “*Will* you?” would be the form of courtesy, were the expression of this considered necessary or desirable ; it is a form, moreover, that is already engaged to make inquiry as to the second person's will or determination. However, “Will you?” is used for mere futurity side by side with “Shall you?”

“What *shall* you do?” “What *will* you do?” “*Shall* you come back to-morrow?”—may inquire as to the future merely. The meaning is—“What *are* you to do?” *Are* you to come back ?

For the third person, “*Shall* he?” puts the action as dependent on the second person, and accordingly must be set aside. Apart from this pre-occupation, it might have stood for simple futurity : the motive of courtesy, which caused the substitution of “will” in the affirmative form, has no influence here. “*Will* he?” while naturally inquiring as to “his” will, inclination, or determination, is also the form used for the case of mere futurity. “*Will* they be present?” “Who *will* be next president?” express simple futurity : much the same as “*Are* they to be present?” “Who *is* to be next President?”

*Will* it be dark before you reach the tower ?



Will I put the tea on?

Will I put the tea on? What will I do. When will we get through this book? Will soon? Where will I get it? Will you prefer to will you do about it? Where will you be next v you go?

**Obs. 42.—Would and Should** follow the same rules as *shall* and *will*.

Thus, "He said he should be drowned; not him." "He said he would be drowned; nobody's

As to *would* and *should*, it will be found that, when they are used, the former with some implication of will, the latter with some implication of wish. For example, *would*, when it expresses a habit or a custom, as "He would weep all day," "He would bluster like He habitually exercise of will. In such phrases as "Would that it were morning!" "Would that it were morning!" mere will is expressed, and *would* can hardly be called an auxiliary. Consequently, when will or wish is expressed in other part of the phrase, *would* becomes superfluous. Expressing willingness, we say, "I would do it;" but if we introduce *willingly* or *with pleasure*, we should say, "I should willingly, or with pleasure request," not "I would willingly," etc. In like manner, "I will see you to-morrow," not "I would see you to-morrow."

as we have "He (or it) *will* seem," we should expect "He *would* seem," and so, "It *would* seem." But the best use for centuries has been, "It *should* seem," "One *should* think," etc. . . . The impersonal use of *should* where, according to analogy, we should look for *would*, I shall not undertake to explain. . . . To my readers I shall venture to say that if they express hoping and wishing and the like with *will* and *would*, and command, demand, and mandatory desire with *shall* and *should*—for example, "I hope that Mrs. Unwin *will* invite them to tea" and "I wish that Mrs. Unwin *would* invite them to tea;" but "He commands that Mrs. Unwin *shall* invite them to tea," and "He desired that Mrs. Unwin *should* invite them to tea;" and, impersonally, "It is wished that no person *shall* leave his seat," and "It was requested that no persons *should* leave their seats"—they will not be far from right.—R. G. WHITE.

EXERCISE XXVI.—Correct the use of auxiliaries in the following sentences.

*Example.*—It was intended that the army should march the next day.

It was intended that the army would march the next day.

(In like manner, throw the rest of the short sentences in Exercise XXIV. into the past tense, and give the correct auxiliary.)

He recommended that the place would be given to a man that should be acceptable.

I would be glad to go. We would be happy to see you. He hastened to return, lest his absence would cause anxiety. He was afraid that he would be burnt. The father was afraid his child should jump in.

Had I been thy son, I think I would not only have been grieved on account of that which I had done, but also would have regretted that I had caused sorrow in the breast of him who loved me so tenderly.—HART'S *Grammar*.

No more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm.

Such a Protector we have had as we would have been glad to have changed for an enemy.—COWLEY.

After a short silence he told me he did not know how I would take what he was going to say.—SWIFT.

I would be glad if Mr. — were, upon his opinion of particulars.—SHENSTONE.

If this passion were simply painful, we v greatest care all persons and places that cou sion.—BURKE.

I would wish to commence a new epoch in introductory chapters.—BURKE.

**Obs. 43.—Delicate Shades** of n by peculiar uses of *shall*, *will*, *should*, u careful attention.

**SHALL FOR WILL.**—There is a fine use of *shall* escapes some intelligent and cultivated reader found in the following passage from a number written by Addison: “There is not a girl in have her own will in going to a mask, and she shepherdess.” . . . But mere futurity was meant to express, nor did he express a comma assert strongly; and therefore, instead of the wo the third person predicates simple futurity, he implies more or less of obligation—here a pro as to control action. . . . An example of tl surpassed in delicacy and exactness, and consequ in the following passage—my memorandum of tl is unfortunately lost—and which refers to th President Lincoln :

tell you." The influence of the speaker over the person spoken to is signified by *shall*.—BAIN.

**OTHER USES.**—"Accidents will happen" is the same as "Accidents happen." The "will" gives emphasis by a sort of personification; accidents take it into their heads and resolve to happen.

"Any thermometer will answer the purpose." This is really the expression of a universal fact, and ought to be present, *answers*. The use of "will" is dramatic; it tells the person addressed to take and try any thermometer, and predicts what the result will be.—BAIN.

As who should say, Lo ! thus my strength is tied.—SHAKESPEARE.

He desired I would stand like a Colossus, with my legs as far asunder as I conveniently could.—SWIFT.

See other illustrations on page 58.

**Obs. 44.**—**May** and **Can.**—*May*, the auxiliary of permission, must be distinguished from *can*, the auxiliary of possibility. Thus, Who can advise, may speak.—MILTON.

**EXERCISE XXVII.**—Tell the exact meaning conveyed by the auxiliaries in the following sentences, making corrections where needed, and showing how a change of auxiliaries would alter the meaning.

*Example.*—"The knight said he would have the lady," would be in direct statement, "The knight said, 'I will have her.'" So, "And the dwarf said he would have her," corresponds with "The dwarf said, 'I will have her.'" Hence as written, the sentence means that each, the knight and the dwarf, was determined to have the lady for himself. But if the dwarf said, "You shall have her," meaning to aid the knight, then the last half of the sentence should read, "and the dwarf said he should have her." In reading, the first meaning would require the emphasis on *he*; the second would require the emphasis on *should*.

The knight said he would have the lady, and the dwarf said he would have her.

If I could tell you, I would. If I could tell you, I should.

I hoped thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife.

from my table in my absence, and the plates  
absence, and nobody shall see me.—SHENSTON

I have an old aunt that visits me sometimes  
is the perfect counterpart of them. She shall  
sigh with Dr. Young, for a wager.—SHENSTON

The minister who should propose it wou  
told, etc.—HELPS.

#### THE INDIRECT OBJECT.

**An Indirect Object** is required  
meaning of some verbs. This may be (1)  
Pronoun, (2) a Preposition Phrase, (3)  
Phrase, (4) an Adjective, (5) an Infinitive,

Thus, (1) They made Cromwell Protector; (2)  
(3) The people counted him for a prophet; (4)  
as his heir; (5) The jury found him guilty; (6)  
(7) They heard him walking.

(1) **The Noun** is the Indirect Obj  
some verbs take this object only.

(6) **The Infinitive** in this use is the  
James Harris:

*It naturally coalesces with all those verbs that  
ence, Desire, or Volition of the Soul, but not rec<sup>d</sup>  
th...*

expressed. *I desire, I am willing, I want*—What? The sentences, we see, are defective and imperfect. We must help them, then, by *Infinitives*, which express the proper Actions to which they tend, *I desire to read, I am willing to learn, I want to see*. Thus is the whole rendered complete, as well in sentiment as in syntax.—*Hermes*. See also note from Gilmore, on page 1.

**Obs. 45.**—A series of infinitives may cause ambiguity even in a short sentence.

Thus, “Do you intend to come to help me work or to play?” may have any of the following meanings :

(1) Do you intend (to come to help me to work or to play), or do you not intend to?

(2) Do you intend to come (to help me to work or to play), or must I go to you?

(3) Do you intend to come to help me (to work or to play), or must I work or play alone?

(4) Is it to help me that you intend to come, or is it in order to work, or to play?

(5) Is it in order to help me to work that you intend to come, or is it in order to play?

(6) Is it in order to help me to work that you intend to come, or is it in order to help me to play?

Besides the above distinct meanings, there are numerous shades of difference, like the following :

(7) Do you intend to come to help me to work or to play, whichever I happen to be doing?

**Obs. 46.**—To distinguish the infinitive of purpose, *in order to* may be substituted for *to*, or the infinitive may be changed to a finite form introduced by *that*.

Thus, to express the third meaning in the sentence just given, we might say, “Do you intend to come in order to help me?” or “Do you intend to come that you may help me?”

EXERCISE XXVIII.—Point out the ambiguity in the infinitives following, and reconstruct the sentences so as to convey each meaning unmistakably.

*Example.*—"He said he wished to take his friend with him to visit the capital and to study medicine." Here it is doubtful whether the meaning is

He said that he wished to take his friend with him,

(1) and also to visit the capital and study medicine, or

(2) "that his friend might visit the capital and might also study medicine," or

(3) "on a visit to the capital, and that he also wished to study medicine."—ABBOTT.

He started to go to try to help him. To travel to Europe to seek to find how to learn to live to be comfortable is preposterous.

#### MODIFIERS OF THE PREDICATE.

**The Predicate** may be modified by (1) **Adverbs**, (2) **Preposition Phrases**, or (3) **Participle Phrases**.

**Obs. 47.**—**Adverbs** must be inserted with care to distinguish by their position which word they qualify.

Thus, Only the boy hit the bird; the boy only hit the bird; the boy hit the bird only.

**EXERCISE XXIX.**—Supply appropriate adverbs to the following sentences.

*Example.*—The lark sings merrily in the clear heavens.

The lark sings—in the clear heavens. Assistance was—given, and—received. The appearances of nature are—changing. The archer handled his bow—. The terrified animal rushed—through the arena. The orator declaimed—on his favorite topic. The lady was—attired. The boy was—warned of his danger. Men—pursue fortune. —soared the eagle. Bad habits are too—acquired. The moon shone—. The ship was driven—. The boy wrote his exercise—. Eliza dances—. Judge not—of your neighbor. He acted—to his promise. The soldiers were—attached to their general. Fortune does not—attend merit.

**Obs. 48.**—When modifying the predicate as a whole the adverb usually precedes the verb; or if the verb is

composite usually comes between the parts; but it must not separate the parts of the infinitive.

Thus, He carefully discriminated; He has carefully discriminated; He tried carefully to discriminate (not, *to carefully discriminate*).

The law of PRIORITY rests upon certain distinct and important considerations. The first is that, on the most general principle of construction, the qualification should precede the thing qualified. In our language, this is the usage with the adjective, and to a considerable extent with the adverb. Hence, if a qualification lies between two words, and is not specially excluded from the one that precedes, the mere principle of order would make us refer it to the one that follows: we always by preference look forward.

Another important circumstance connected with Priority is that a qualifying adjunct bears upon all that follows, until there is a break. It is not simply the word or phrase immediately following, but the entire group of circumstances up to the end of the sentence, or at least to a comma pause.—BAIN.

**Obs. 49.**—When emphatic, the adverb follows the verb; as, He left the room very slowly.

When the verb is a single word, if the adverb precedes the verb it will seem to modify the entire predicate, but if it follows the verb it will often seem to modify more especially the action. Thus, in the sentence, "Government naturally forms itself," the meaning is that it is a natural thing for government to form itself; while in the sentence, "Government forms itself naturally," the meaning is that government forms itself in a natural way.—DAY.

So in "He very slowly left the room" the emphasis is upon the *fact* of his leaving; in "He left the room very slowly," the emphasis is upon the manner of his leaving. The following sentence from Huxley is therefore faulty: "We falsely pretend to be the inheritors of their culture, . . . unless we are penetrated with an unhesitating faith," etc.

**Obs. 50.**—Though not wrongly placed as regards the words with which they are immediately connected, ad-



adverb back to its unemphatic position before it may be remedied by punctuation (see page 2) to make the arrangement clear in itself.

Compare, They seized on him suddenly making the door.

In practice an adverb is often used to qualify where the latter adverb is more emphatic than This is very common where the adverbial modifier is in emphatic position at the beginning of the sentence. *spot* our guide declared that Claverhouse had fallen.

**Obs. 51.**—When modifying a special verb should be placed next to it. (See examples lxxxv.)

**Obs. 52.**—NOT must be connected with part of the sentence that is denied. This may be (i) the Subject, (ii) the Predicate, (iii) a Modifier of subject or predicate.

Thus, (i) No mention was made of him; (ii) I made of him; (iii) Mention was made not of brother.

(1) *Denial of the Subject.*—(a) *Universal.*

There is a kind of negation or denial that is

ative the presence of all the men, to deny that any man is present, we need some other construction. We may attain the end by finding a word that is the negative of the predicate—"all the men are *absent*;" "all the heavenly bodies are *invisible*." The more usual way is to prefix "no" to the subject, thus: "*No* men are present;" "*No* heavenly bodies are visible." The negative by thus preceding the noun, comes into the position of the adjective, but we may still regard it as playing the part of an adverb.

*This is the type of universal denial*, and it is the most emphatic form of negation to be found in the language. Like all our strong effects, it is apt to be abused by being overdone. "He has no home" is a superfluous variety of "he has *not* a home," which puts the negative word to its proper function.

Our plural noun, without "all," has assumed the meaning of universality; hence we obtain a universal denial by the adverb in its proper place and character. "The men are *not* present," "the stars are not visible," "metals do not occur in the newer rocks." This is the mild form of universal denial; and, for ordinary purposes, it is quite sufficient. The other form should be reserved for occasions where there is need to deny with energy. "Men have *never* seen God," is substantially a universal denial. The strong form is "*No* man hath seen God at any time." Equally emphatic, without any license, would have been, "*Never* has any man seen God." The energy consists in placing the negative word first in the clause.

"*No* mere man, since the fall, is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God;" "Since the fall, mere men are *unable* in this life—."

"*No* golf balls coming over these walls will be returned." "Golf balls—will *not* be returned."

"*No* dogs admitted," would be more tolerable in a form common enough—"no *admittance* to dogs." It would be sufficient, and therefore preferable, to say—"Dogs (are) *not* admitted."

"We shall get *no* farther relaxation of the rules;" "The rules will *not* be farther relaxed for us."

"*No* degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance; and, therefore, *no* man should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained." "Any degree of knowledge attainable by man is unable to set him above the need of hourly assistance; hence every one should think it not unnecessary—."

"No knight in England could match King Henry VIII. in the tournament." "In the tournament Henry was not matched ([was] unmatched) by any knight in England."

"I have none in my possession." "I do not possess one."—BAIRD.

( $\beta$ ) *Partial*.—An error so common as almost to be an idiom substitutes a universal subject with a negative predicate for a partial subject and a positive predicate.

Thus, "All is not gold that glitters," implying literally that some is gold that does not glitter, has been corrected in rhetorics to "All that glitters is not gold." This means literally that nothing that glitters is gold, or, in other words, that gold never glitters. To express what the proverb intends, we must say "Not all that glitters is gold."

Campbell says :

"In negations it holds very generally that the negative particle should be joined to the verb. Yet in some cases the expression is greatly enlivened and consequently the denial appears more determinate by beginning the sentence with the adverb. 'Not every one,' says our Saviour, 'that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my father who is in heaven.' Vary the position of the negative in the first member, and say, 'Every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,' and you will flatten the expression exceedingly. On so slight a circumstance in the arrangement does the energy of a sentence sometimes depend."—*Rhetoric*, ii. 311.

Here it is assumed that "Not every one——shall enter" is the same statement as "Every one——shall not enter," while the meaning is widely different.

Find errors of this kind on pages 1, 42.

(II) *Denial of the Predicate*.—This is the most common form of negative sentences, and should be used whenever the emphasis is not upon a particular part of the sentence.

Thus, "No wonder, then, that one likes not to be ridiculed or laughed at."—CAMPBELL. This would imply that "not to be ridiculed" was a certain positive state or condition, like "not to be penniless," which is another form for "having some money about him." But the thought in mind is not of "not being ridiculed," but of "being ridiculed," and the assertion intended is, not that one *does* like "not being ridiculed," but that one *does not* like "being ridiculed." Hence the sentence should read, "No wonder, then, that one does not like to be ridiculed."

Again, "In this book, as in its predecessors, the author has aimed at being neither brilliant nor profound."—J. G. HOLLAND.

Mr. Holland would have expressed what he does say, only with more strength, had he said, "The author has aimed at being stupid and silly." What he meant to say was, not that he *had* aimed *not* to be brilliant, but that he had *not* aimed to *be* brilliant. The sentence should have read, "In this book, as in its predecessors, the author has not aimed at being either brilliant or profound."

Sometimes care in arrangement is needed to prevent ambiguity. Thus, "The cure for drunkenness is not to be ascetic." Here the *not* is intended to modify the verb, but may easily be taken to modify the last three words. The first meaning would be expressed by saying, "To be ascetic is not the cure for drunkenness;" the second by saying, "Not to be ascetic is the cure for drunkenness."

(III) *Denial of a Modifier*.—Here also errors are frequent.

Thus, "No allusion is meant or made to their face, but to their race."—R. G. WHITE. Here the connecting of the negative with the subject makes a universal negative,—there was no allusion at all. But the last clause shows that there was an allusion, only it was not to their face, but to their race. The sentence should therefore read, "Allusion was meant and made not to their face, but to their race."

Again, even Abbott, in his "How to Write Clearly," puts in heavy type the following useful rule: "In all styles, especially in letter-writing, a final emphasis must not be so frequent as to become obtrusive and monotonous." What he means is, "Not in any style, especially in letter-writing, must a final emphasis—," etc.

NEGATIVE PREFIXES.—It should be remarked that the prefixes *un-*, *in-*, etc., do not, as "not" does, extend over a conjunction to the next adjective, making it negative.

Thus, *It was not safe or secure*, means that it was not safe and not secure, but *It was unsafe or secure*, means that though not safe it was secure—an absurdity; though we might say *It was unmoved or steadfast*. Hence the error in the following sentence:

*Regan and Goneril are the only pictures of the unnatural in*

Shakspeare; the pure unnatural—and you will observe that Shakspeare has left their hideousness *unsoftened* or *diversified* by a single line of goodness or common human frailty.—COLERIDGE.

**EXERCISE XXX.**—Transfer the negation so as to bring out the meaning intended in the following sentences, explaining just what is meant by the words as they stand, and how the meaning is changed.

*Example.*—As written the statement is that all of them are inapplicable, while the meaning of the author is that some are applicable and some are not. Hence the predicate should be made positive, and the subject partial. “Not all the rules of Latin syntax can be applied to our language.”

All the rules of Latin syntax, it is true, cannot be applied to our language.—BLAIR.

Everything favored by good use is not on that account to be retained.—CAMPBELL.

But it ought carefully to be noted that every address, even every pertinent address to contempt, is not humorous.—CAMPBELL.

The result is not pleasant to us only because it fulfils our predictions, but because any other would have been productive of infinite mischief.—*The Spectator*.

Mr. Ris was not happy because Nature had ordained it so beforehand; . . . he was happy because, etc.

No essay should terminate very abruptly, nor too gradually.—PARKER'S *Exercises in English Composition*.

**Obs. 53.**—Double negatives in English no longer convey a negative sense.

In Anglo-Saxon, two negatives strengthened the negation, as in Greek. Even in Shakspeare we find many illustrations of this use.

I never was, nor never will be false.

The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils.

This England never did, nor never shall  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror.

Thackeray thus reproduces in a novel of the age of Queen Anne a usage then common :

And then she said that we must leave directly, and abused my mamma,—who was cognizant of the business; but she wasn't never thinking of anything but father.—*Esmond*.

“Wasn't never” and similar expressions are now expected only from the quite illiterate, but more subtle blunders are still not uncommon.

EXERCISE XXXI.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—“ — any more than velocity,” etc.

Popularity alone, therefore, is no test at all of the eloquence of the speaker, no more than velocity alone could be of the force of the external impulse originally given to the body moving.—*CAMPBELL*.

I won't never see you no more at no time.

He couldn't throw it over, no more than as if it had weighed a ton.

**Obs. 54.**—Negative sentences can be made affirmative in form by substituting a negative or obverse of the predicate.

Thus, “They are not here”—“They are gone elsewhere;” “No man is perfect”—“All men are imperfect;” “Matter is not self-moved”—“Matter is moved from without.”

This is an operation of great significance in logic, and not without importance in grammar; it is the mode of giving the reality apart from the form of negation, and should be familiar to those that are tracking out the varieties of English expression. General Havelock addressed the Indian army in these terms :

Soldiers, your labors, your privations, your sufferings, your val. r, will not be forgotten (will be remembered) by a grateful country.

The negative form is here chosen for emphasis; it is the case that people are in a more energetic mood when denying than when affirming; denial implies an opponent to fight; affirmation not necessarily so.—*BAIN*.

**EXERCISE XXXII.**—Transform the following negative into affirmative, and the following affirmative into negative sentences.

*Example.*—I fail to understand you.

I do not understand you.

She acted unbecomingly.

He did not see through it accurately.

The cars never swerved from the track.

**Obs. 55.**—ONLY should generally be placed before the word it is meant to qualify. But it should not separate two emphatic words, or be used where *alone* can be substituted.

Thus, not "Only Cæsar came," where the meaning is, "Cæsar came alone." If the meaning is, "Nobody but Cæsar came," or "Nobody of any more consequence than Cæsar came," with a somewhat contemptuous fling at Cæsar's lack of importance, then "Only Cæsar came," would be correct.

*On Postal Cards.*—The difficulty of properly placing the word only is shown in the history of the inscription on postal cards, which has been thus given :

The direction at first was, "Write the address only on this side." If *only* is read in connection with *address*, as intended, the meaning is clear; but if read in connection with *on this side*, it becomes ridiculous, for nobody would write the address on both sides.

Then : "Write the address on this side—the message on the other." But this seemed unnecessary, for any one accustomed to writing letters would put the address upon the same side with the stamp.

Finally : "Nothing but the address can be placed on this side." Of this it has been well remarked that the average school-boy knows better. He "can" place a good deal more than the address on that side, and he concludes that the authors of that statement had a more varied ability than the boy who couldn't tell a lie, for they have demonstrated that they can. (See page lxxiii.)

Better : "Place on this side nothing but the address."

*At the beginning of a sentence, only* is equivalent to *but*, as, "I don't like to importune you, *only* I know you'll forgive me." This may lead to ambiguity, as, "Help yourself to these oranges, *only* a dozen were eaten yesterday." According as one has a basket of oranges or a box, this may mean, I want to be generous, but you must remember that a dozen are gone already : or, I am afraid

they will not all be eaten ; no more than a dozen are gone so far. In conversation the doubt would be removed by the emphasis, but in a letter it might lead to unfortunate mistakes.

*The location of an adverb* is one of the most perplexing details of composition. One must have a very well-trained and quick taste to decide upon it intuitively with uniform accuracy. Take, for example, the word "only," which is sometimes adverbial, and sometimes adjective, in its qualifying force. I select from Gibbon's *History* a sentence of moderate length, which contains the word. Observe how many distinct meanings may be obtained by simply sliding it gradually from the beginning to the end of the sentence.

First,

*Only* they forgot to observe, that, in the first ages of society, a successful war against savage animals is one of the most beneficial labors of heroism ;

that is, they did some things well, but one thing not well—they forgot to observe, etc.

Secondly,

*They* only forgot to observe, etc. ;

that is, either they were the only persons who did so ; or, thirdly, they did not intentionally neglect the fact, they only *forgot* it.

Fourthly,

*They* forgot to observe that only in the *first* ages of society ;

that is, there is but one period in the history of society in which the fact observed is true.

Fifthly,

*They* forgot to observe that, in the first ages only of *society*, etc. ;

that is, it is not true in the ages preceding organized social life.

Sixthly,

*They* forgot to observe, that, in the first ages of society, only a *successful* war against savage animals, etc. ;

that is, not war which is a failure.

Seventhly,

*They* forgot to observe, that, in the first ages of society, a successful war only *against* savage animals, etc. ;

that is, not a war for their preservation.



## Eighthly,

They forgot to observe, that, in the first ages of society, a successful war against only *savage* animals, etc ;

that is, not a war against animals of domestic use.

## Ninthly,

They forgot to observe, etc., war against *savage* animals is only *one* of the most beneficial labors ;

that is, there are other such labors of heroism.

## Tenthly,

They forgot to observe, etc., a successful war against *savage* animals is one of only the *most* beneficial labors of heroism ;

that is, it is not to be deemed a labor of inferior worth ; or,

## Eleventhly,

They forgot to observe, etc., that such a war is one of only the *most beneficial labors* of heroism ;

that is, it is not to be regarded as a pastime.

## Twelfthly,

They forgot to observe, that, etc., is one of the most beneficial labors of *heroism* only ;

that is, no virtue inferior to heroism is competent to the task.

Here are no less than twelve distinct shades of thought, not all of them elegantly, not all precisely, but all perspicuously expressed, with the aid of emphasis in the reading, by simply sliding one word from point to point from the beginning to the end of a sentence of twenty-four words.—PHELPS.

*Carelessness.*—The fact is, with respect to such adverbs as *only*, *wholly*, *at least*, and the rest of that tribe, that in common discourse the tone and emphasis we use in pronouncing them generally serves to show their reference, and to make the meaning clear ; and hence we acquire the habit of throwing them in loosely in the course of a period. But in writing, where a man speaks to the eye and not to the ear, he ought to be more accurate, and so to connect those adverbs with the words which they qualify as to put his meaning out of doubt upon the first inspection.—BLAIR.

People who have practised composition as much and with as vigilant an eye as myself know also, by thousands of cases, how

infinite is the disturbance caused in the logic of a thought by the mere position of a word so despicable as the word "even." . . .

The station of a syllable may cloud the judgment of a council.  
—DE QUINCEY.

**EXERCISE XXXIII.**—Change the following sentences so as to convey the meaning intended.

*Example.*—I shall give only one sentence more on this head.

I shall only give one sentence more on this head.—BLAIR.

But though we were ten days in Naples I only saw one quarrel.  
—HOWELLS.

A style of writing "which," as Junius said of the character of Sir William Draper, "will only pass without censure when it passes without observation."—MOON.

Existing laws on the subject of insanity are mainly judicial, legislatures not having been able to formulate a statute on the question, only in the most vague and indefinite manner.—*N. A. Review.* (Here either *not* should be omitted, or *only* should become *except*.)

He could only live in agitation; he could only breathe in a volcanic atmosphere.—ALISON.

When Napoleon's system of government became unfortunate alone, it was felt to be insupportable.—ALISON.

**Obs. 56.**—As and So are frequently misused.

*After Negatives.*—In the best usage, *so* is used after a negative in preference to *as*; thus, "I like him as well, but I do not like her so well." The negative may be only implied; as, "There are few that could do so much," which is equivalent to "There are not many that —."

Art may, in the execution, be as polished and delicate as nature; but in the design can never show herself so august and magnificent.—BLAIR.

*Mistaken for Conjunctions.*—Care must be taken to avoid the ambiguity of placing *as* where it might be either an adverb or a conjunction.

Thus, "For though they may appear as beautiful or strange."  
—ADDISON. Here the meaning may be that they appear as beautiful or as strange as something else appears; or that they appear as beautiful or strange, and not as commonplace or familiar.

EXERCISE XXXIV.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—I did not think it so bad as that.

I did not think it as bad as that.

I have been as idle since, but never as happy.—*Esmond*.

He was not as prosperous or as contented.

She seemed as intelligent.

**Obs. 57.**—**At Least** is a phrase often used ambiguously.

Thus, "I think you will find my Latin exercises *at least as good as my cousin's*." Does this mean (1) "my Latin exercises, though not perhaps my other exercises," or (2) "though not very good, at least as good as my cousin's?" Write for (1) "At least my Latin exercises you will find;" for (2) "I think you will find my Latin exercises as good as my cousin's, at least."—ABBOTT.

(2) **Preposition Phrases.** (See page 1.)

(3) **The Participle Phrase**, when modifying the predicate, as when modifying the subject, is often a source of ambiguity unless carefully placed. Thus:

A Senior distinguished himself yesterday by killing a huge rat while sunning himself in the gutter on Lake Street.

Rev. Dr. Harris, sir, having been elected president by the unanimous vote of the boards of trustees and overseers of Bowdoin College, I come on their behalf to induct you, etc.—Quoted by PHELPS.

Don't repeat anecdotes, good or bad. A very good thing becomes foolishness after hearing it several times.—*Don't; a Manual of Mistakes*.

Few need to be informed that one Herod caused to be slaughtered the babes of Bethlehem, commonly called "The Slaughter of the Innocents."—*Popular Rhetoric*.

For examples of wrong arrangement of words & phrases,  
r. pp 294 - 5, 298

Found—Evidently by mistake a package was put in my carriage while standing in Fayette Street, supposing it was left by my wife, but found it was not ours. The owner can have the same by calling at No. 6 Sabey Place and proving property and paying for this advertisement. John Raynor.

## ARRANGEMENT OF PHRASES.

**An Absolute Phrase** should stand at the beginning of the sentence; as, The king being dead, a dispute arose as to the succession.

NOTE V.—*The absolute phrase is set off from the rest of the sentence by a comma.*

**Obs. 58.**—**Priority** among adverbial modifiers follows the general order of first those of Time, then those of Place, last those of Manner.

Thus, "Married, Sept. 8, 1883, in Syracuse, N. Y., by the Rev. S. S. Smith, Henry K. Wilkes and Emma F. Lane."

The law of **PRIORITY** rests upon certain distinct and important considerations. The first is that, on the most general principle of construction, the qualification should precede the thing qualified. In our language, this is the usage with the adjective, and to a considerable extent with the adverb. Hence, if a qualification lies between two words, and is not specially excluded from the one that precedes, the mere principle of Order would make us refer it to the one that follows; we always by preference look forward.

Another important circumstance connected with Priority is that a qualifying adjunct bears upon all that follows, until there is a break. It is not simply the word or phrase immediately following, but the entire group of circumstances up to the end of the sentence, or at least to a comma pause.—BAIN.

In poetry, and occasionally in impassioned prose, a series of adverbial modifiers may be accumulated before the verb; as,

High on a throne of royal state which far  
Outshone the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind.  
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Showers on her kings barbaric gold and pearl,  
Satan exalted sat.—*Paradise Lost.*

Deep in the shady sadness of a vale,  
 Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
 Far from the fiery sun and eve's one star,  
 Sat gray-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone.—*Hyperion.*

Sometimes the sentences are beyond cure by mere re-arrangement, and demand rebuilding with new materials.

A new stone building has been erected at an expense of \$1,200 so as to divide the inmates into compartments.

After partaking of a hearty breakfast, the balloon was brought into town amidst the cheers of the inhabitants.—*Quoted by ALFORD.*

**Obs. 59.**—Usually adverbial elements should be scattered, to make the sentence flow without pauses.

Thus, Helps describes a river as “flowing with equable current busily by great towns.” He might have said, “with equable current flowing busily by great towns.”

When the number of circumstances and qualifications to be included in the sentence is great, the most judicious course is neither to enumerate them all before introducing the idea to which they belong, nor to put this idea first and let it be remodelled to agree with the particulars afterward mentioned; but to do a little of each. Take a case. It is desirable to avoid so extremely direct an arrangement as the following :

We came to our journey's end, at last, with no small difficulty, after much fatigue, through deep roads, and bad weather.

Yet, to transform this into an entirely indirect sentence would not produce a satisfactory effect; as witness :

At last, with no small difficulty, after much fatigue, through deep roads, and bad weather, we came to our journey's end.

Dr. Whately, from whom we quote the first of these two arrangements, proposes this construction :

At last, after much fatigue, through deep roads and bad weather, we came, with no small difficulty, to our journey's end.

Here it will be observed that by introducing the words “we came” a little earlier in the sentence, the labor of carrying forward so many particulars is diminished, and the subsequent qualification

“with no small difficulty” entails an addition to the thought that is very easily made. But a further improvement may be produced by introducing the words “we came” still earlier; especially if at the same time the qualifications be rearranged in conformity with the principle already explained, that the more abstract elements of the thought should come before the more concrete. Observe the better effect obtained by making these two changes:

At last, with no small difficulty, and after much fatigue, we came, through deep roads and bad weather, to our journey's end.

This reads with comparative smoothness; that is, with less hindrance from suspensions and reconstructions of thought—with less mental effort.—HERBERT SPENCER. (See also pages 277, 278.)

**Obs. 60.**—In placing or scattering adverbial phrases, care must be taken not to separate the modifier so far from the word modified as to produce ambiguity.

**EXERCISE XXXV.**—Correct the use of modifiers in the following sentences (see also those on page lix).

*Example.*—Rome once more ruled over the prostrate nations *by the power of superstition.*

This may mean either of two things—(1) that Rome had at a former time ruled over the nations “by the power of superstition,” and now resumed that power; (2) that Rome had formerly ruled over the nations by some other power—that of conquest, or of imperial influence—and now did so by a different power, that of superstition. The sentence, as it stands, most naturally bears the former construction. To convey the latter meaning it should stand thus: “Rome, by the power of superstition, once more ruled over the prostrate nations.”

Martha Grant attempted to force the collection of twenty-five cents from Sally Jones for making a dress by the use of an axe and a razor.

Erected to the memory of John Phillips, accidentally shot as a mark of affection by his brother.

We should be employed in doing good to our fellow-men daily.

The highwayman not only robbed the gentleman, but even the lady.

Man not only desires to be loved, but to be lovely.

The Romans understood liberty at least as well as we.

We admit our total inability to remedy the evil sorrowfully.

To man has been given the power of speech only.

The memoirs of his father sufficiently appear to repel those accusations.

They are men who nobly know how to die.

He almost found fault with every one, at all events of the poet's minor pieces.

Philosophers have been at a loss, to explain always the secret of the strange power, which patriotic tunes exercise over the armies of nations.

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## SECTION SECOND.

### COMPLEX SENTENCES.

**A Complex Sentence** is one in which a subordinate sentence is used either as the Subject, as the Object, as the Predicate, or as a Modifier. (For convenience, sentences in which one member begins with "if" are in this volume treated as Compound Sentences, though often considered Complex.)

Hence, the Subordinate Sentence must be one of three kinds: (1) a Noun Sentence, (2) an Adjective Sentence, or (3) an Adverb Sentence.

**NOTE.**—The Predicate may be made up of a Copula and a Noun Sentence; as, All things are not what they seem.

(1) **Noun Sentences** occupy the place and follow the construction of nouns, and may therefore be either (a) the Subject, (b) the Object, (c) the Indirect Object, or (d) the Predicate of the principal sentence. Though usually introduced by *that*, they sometimes begin without it.

Thus, (a) **That a historian should not record trifles, is perfectly true.**—MACAULAY. **Whatever is, is right. That you have wronged me, doth appear in this.**

(b) **She knew that his heart was darkened with her shadow.**—BYRON. **I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards, to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult.**—BURKE. **I perceive you feel the dint of pity.**

(c) I was taught in my youth that to know how to wait is the secret of success.

(d) I am not what I used to be.

EXERCISE XXXVI.—Point out the Noun, the Adjective, and the Adverb sentences in the following exercise, and tell how each is used.

*Example.*—*She is eight years old*, is a noun sentence, used as the object of *said*.

She was eight years old, she said.

What you say is true.

The dog is where it ought to be.

What touches us ourselves shall be last served.

Yes! thy proud lords, unpitied land! shall see  
That man hath yet a soul.

That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither,  
Doth in this appear.

That is what I told you.

I fear our purpose is discovered.

That they are free, they know.

Man cannot cover what God would reveal.

That some one had blundered soon became apparent.

By my word, the Saxon said,  
The riddle is already read.

You said the enemy would not come down.

That they escaped unhurt seems a miracle.

I trow they did not part in scorn.

EXERCISE XXXVII.—Fill the following blanks by inserting Noun Sentences:

Young people too often imagine —. I promise to do —.  
No one can deny —. It is easy to prove —. His excuse for not being present was —. A glance at the map of Europe will show us —. Time will discover —. Leaves are to plants —. His courage and success illustrate the proverb —. — has been called the golden rule. — requires no demonstration.

The king could not understand —. I am more willing to give —, than to ask —. — doth appear in this. When the trial is concluded, we shall know —. We believe —, and —. It has often been observed —. — is right. After the accident, the children gathered round their father, and asked —. He complains of our being late, but he did not tell us —. I have tried every means, but I cannot discover —. — is a traitor. Though we have sought him everywhere, we cannot tell —.

**Obs. 61.**—When the noun sentence is (a) a Direct Quotation, or (b) is preceded by an interrogative pronoun, no connecting particle is required.

Thus, (a) Buffon used to say, “Genius is patience.” “Genius is common sense intensified,” is another definition. (b) I know not who you are, or what you want.

**Obs. 62.**—Even when a speech is reported in the third person, it often adds life, and sometimes adds clearness, to omit the *that*.

Thus, “He said he took it ill,” or, “He took it ill, he said,” is better than “He said *that* he took it ill.”

**Obs. 63.**—Dependent clauses introduced by *that* must be kept clear from those that are independent.

Thus, “He replied *that* he wished to go, and intended to get ready,” may mean, “He replied . . . and he intended,” or, “and *that* he intended.”

**EXERCISE XXXVIII.**—Change the following passages from the Direct to the Indirect mode of speech.

*Example.*—I said within myself that I had behaved very ill, but that I had only just set out on my travels, and should learn better manners as I got along.

“I have behaved very ill,” said I within myself; “but I have only just set out on my travels, and shall learn better manners as I get along.”

"The virtue of prosperity," says Lord Bacon, "is temperance; the virtue of adversity is fortitude."

"I trust," said Lord Brougham, "that at length the time is come when Parliament will no longer bear to be told that slave-owners are the best law-givers on slavery."

"English ladies," says Erasmus, "are divinely pretty and too good-natured."

Cato the Censor concluded all his speeches in the Roman Senate with the words, "Carthage must be destroyed."

Agis, King of the Spartans, on being asked how many men he had, confidently replied, "Enough to put the enemy to flight."

When Alexander commanded the people to give him divine honors, the Spartans replied, "Since Alexander wishes to be called a god, let him be a god."

When Xerxes summoned the little army of Leonidas to lay down their arms, they retorted in scorn, "Let him come and take them."

On discovering the principle of specific gravity, Archimedes rushed out of his bath, exclaiming, "I have found it!"

Dr. Guillotin, in describing his beheading machine, afterward called the guillotine, said, "With my machine I whisk off your head in a twinkling, and you feel no pain."

When the Chesapeake was boarded by the crew of the Shannon, the gallant Captain Lawrence fell exclaiming, "Don't give up the ship!"

On reading Macaulay's "History of England," Sydney Smith remarked: "I wish I knew anything as well as Macaulay thinks he knows everything."

At Worms, as at Augsburg, Luther replied briefly: "I will retract when my doctrines are not merely declared to be false, but are proved to be so."

On seeing the formidable Chateau Gaillard rise, King Philip exclaimed in wrath, "I would take it, were its walls of iron." "I would hold it, were its walls of butter," was the defiant answer of King Richard.

"I cannot, my Lords," said the Earl of Chatham, "I will not join in congratulation on misfortune and disgrace. This, my Lords, is a perilous and tremendous moment. It is not a time for adulation; the smoothness of flattery cannot save us in this rugged and

awful crisis. It is now necessary to instruct the throne in the language of truth."

He said with great emphasis, "I assure you there is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman orators."

"If it feed nothing else," said Shylock, "it will feed my revenge."

I would not have a slave to till my ground,  
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep.—COWPER.

I have had playmates, I have had companions,  
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school days.—LAMB.

King Charles wrote to Prince Rupert in the following terms: "First, I must congratulate with you for your good successes, assuring you that the things themselves are no more welcome to me than that you are the means. I know the importance of supplying you with powder, for which I have taken all possible ways, and have sent both to Ireland and Bristol."

The Marquis rose and said: "Nor is it of the insufficiency of any future evidence only, that I complain. Even of the past I must express my fear that much must be obliterated, and the whole rendered obscure from the various lapses of time since it was delivered."

Mr. Burke said: "Let me for a moment quit my delegated character, and speak entirely from my personal feelings and conviction. I am known to have had much experience of men and manners—in active life, and amidst occupations the most various! From that experience I now protest, I never knew a man who was bad, fit for service that was good! There is always some disqualifying ingredient mixing and spoiling the compound."

Mr. Fox, assuming the language of the unfortunate prince, exclaimed: "I was the sovereign of a fertile country, happy and beloved; I endeavored to conciliate the friendship of all around me, and, as I thought, with a success which impressed me with every sensation of felicity. This was the situation of which I boasted; but what is now the reverse? I am a wretched exile, dependent on the bounty of those who were my enemies, but whose enmities are now buried in their sympathy for my distresses. What have I done to deserve this punishment?"

EXERCISE XXXIX.—Change the following sentences from the Indirect to the Direct form.

*Example.*—The sage magistrate said: “Beef is the king of meat; beef comprehends in it the essence of partridge, and quail, and venison, and pheasant, and plum-pudding, and custard.”

The sage magistrate said that beef is the king of meat; that beef comprehends in it the essence of partridge, and quail, and venison, and pheasant, and plum-pudding, and custard.

Before the great battle which closed his brilliant career, Nelson displayed his famous signal, that England expected every man that day to do his duty.

Douglas told Hotspur that he would carry his pennon into Scotland, and fix it on the tower of his Castle of Dalkeith, that it might be seen from far.

The Bruce kept looking at his weapon, which was injured by the force of the blow, and said that he had broken his good battle-axe.

Pompey told Lucius Sylla that it was vain to oppose him, for men worshipped the rising rather than the setting sun.

A short time before his death, Cardinal Wolsey said that if he had been as diligent to serve his God as he had been to please his king, He would not have forsaken him in his gray hairs.

Archimedes said that if a fulcrum and a point to stand on were given him, he would move the world with his lever.

Alexander the Great, on being asked why he did not contend in the Olympic Games, said that he would do so when he had kings for his competitors.

When Pyrrhus had shown the utmost fondness for his expedition against the Romans, Cyneas, his chief minister, asked him what he proposed to himself by the war. Pyrrhus said that he meant to conquer the Romans and reduce all Italy to his obedience. Cyneas asked, what then. Pyrrhus said that he would pass over into Sicily, and that then all the Sicilians must be their subjects. Cyneas asked what his Majesty intended next. The King replied that he meant to conquer Carthage and make himself master of all Africa. Then the minister asked what was to be the end of all his expeditions; and the King said that for the rest of

their lives they would sit down to good wine. Cyneas then asked if they could have better than they had then before them, or if they had not already as much as they could drink.

(2) **Adjective Sentences** occupy the place and follow the construction of adjectives (see page xxv). They are all connected with the principal sentence by relatives, or such equivalent words as *when, why, how*, etc.; though when the relative is in the objective case it may be omitted without confusion; as, "The message you gave me I have told him."

And made us lose the good we oft might win.—*Measure for Measure.*

Blair, criticising Addison, says: "In conclusion, instead of [it gives] *the things it represents*, the regularity of correct style requires *the things which it represents*." But the sentence is better without the correction.

**EXERCISE XL.**—Fill the following blanks by inserting Adjective Sentences.

*Example.*—Alfred the Great was one of the wisest monarchs that have ever reigned.

Alfred the Great was one of the wisest monarchs—. Botany is the science—. A metal — is said to be ductile. The earth — is a globe or sphere. The age — has been called the era of inventions. Elasticity is that property—. The man — shows prudence. The Nile is one of those rivers—. He received the reward—. The flowers — have all faded. Offices of trust should be conferred only on those—. Autumn is the season—. Trafalgar was the engagement—. France is the country, where—. The structure of the camel is wonderfully adapted to the countries—. The prisoner confessed the crimes—. The storm — passed away without harm. I should not like to be the man—. The house — has been burnt. I have often wished to revisit the place—. The clergyman — died yesterday at the very hour—. He could not have anticipated the fate—. The motives — are difficult to understand. John Wycliffe — died in 1384. We had not proceeded far when a shower over-



took us—. The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle — was concluded in 1748. He — need not hope for that success—. The statement — does not agree with that—. They — cannot look for the protection of the government—.

**Obs. 64.**—In poetry and in colloquial prose the relative is sometimes omitted when a nominative.

Thus,

'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,  
And robes the mountain in its azure hue.—CAMPELL.

**Obs. 65.**—A blunder as common as it is absurd is the insertion of *and* before adjective sentences. Thus :

The principal and distinguishing excellence of Virgil, and which, in my opinion, he possesses above all others, etc.—BLAIR.

**Obs. 66.**—A general rule for adjective sentences is to place the relative as near as possible to its antecedent. This is an application of the rule of proximity that,

**Obs. 67.**—Pronouns should follow the nouns to which they refer without the intervention of another noun.

Ambiguity from the neglect of this rule is shown in the following sentences (see others on pages 291-294) :

King John of France was led in triumph through the streets of London by the Black Prince, the son of Edward III., *who* had defeated him, and taken him prisoner, at the battle of Poitiers.

Any one unacquainted with the historical facts would be doubtful, from the construction of this sentence, whether it was the Black Prince or his father that had taken John prisoner. The following arrangement would remove the ambiguity : “ King John of France, who had been defeated and taken prisoner at Poitiers by the Black Prince, the son of Edward III., was led in triumph through the streets of London by his conqueror.”

Many clergymen act so directly contrary to this method, *that*, from a habit of saving time and paper, which they acquired at the

university, they write in so diminutive a manner that they are hardly able to go on.—SWIFT. To the group of Dinosaurs belongs the Inquenadon of the Wealden beds, first made known by Dr. Mantelli, whose body was 28 to 30 feet long.—DANA.

When, however, one of two preceding nouns is decidedly superior to the other in emphasis, the more emphatic may be presumed to be the noun referred to by the pronoun, even though the noun of inferior emphasis intervenes. Thus: "At this moment the colonel came up and took the place of the wounded general. He gave orders to halt." Here *he* would naturally refer to *colonel*, though *general* intervenes. A conjunction will often show that a pronoun refers to the subject of the preceding sentence, and not to another intervening noun. "The sentinel at once took aim at the approaching soldier, and fired. He *then* retreated to give the alarm."—ABBOTT.

#### EXERCISE XLI.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—This is a glorious scene, which cannot be surpassed. This is a glorious scene, and which cannot be surpassed.

In fact, scarcely anything of Milton's poetic diction has become obsolete, except some un-English words and phrases of his own coinage, and which failed to get admittance at all.—MARSH.

To head a sect, to infuse party-spirit, to make men arrogant, uncharitable, and malevolent, is the easiest task imaginable, and to which almost any blockhead is fully equal.—CAMPBELL.

Find error in quotation from R. G. White, page lxxii.

I with my family reside in the parish of Stockton, which consists of my wife and daughters.—Quoted by ALFORD.

The most interesting news from Italy is that of the trial of the thieves who robbed the bank of Messrs. Parodi, at Genoa, on May 1, 1862, in open daylight, which commenced at Genoa on the 5th.—Id.

A child was run over by a wagon three years old and cross-eyed with pantalets on which never spoke afterward.

A child eighteen months old tumbled into a well used to catch rain-water that fell headlong into the front area of the house and came near drowning, there being about two feet in the well.

We have received a bunch of grapes from our friend Williams,

for which he will please receive our compliments, some of which are nearly two inches in diameter.

The hotel will be kept by the widow of the former landlord, Mr. Brown, who died last summer on a new and improved plan.

A Howard may look upon scenes with a stoical composure, nay with a seeming hard-heartedness, *which* at first dissolved him in tears.—*Good Words*.

Frank S. Fay, of Meriden, Conn., is busy picking out shot from his face that was intended for a rabbit. His friend, E. C. Birdsey, who was hunting with him on Thursday, got Fay in range with the game.—*N. Y. Sun*.

Questions suggest themselves as to how the reporter knew that Frank Fay's face was intended for a rabbit, and how it became misplaced.

The committee would further recommend that the south room should have new furniture, as the rear seats have all the year been occupied by children that have no backs.

They lay down to rest behind their steeds, picketed to the wall which had accompanied them from the Volga to the Don.—*ALISON*.

**Obs. 68.**—The antecedent must be either a noun, a pronoun, or an infinitive—never an adjective.

Thus sentences like the following are incorrect (see also page cxiv):

Some men are too ignorant to be humble, without which there can be no docility and no progress.—*BERKELEY*.

**Obs. 69.**—Awkwardness results when the antecedent is implied in a possessive case not close to the relative, especially if the possessive be a pronoun. Thus:

This way will direct you to a gentleman's house, that hath the skill to take off these burdens; better, to the house of a gentleman that hath skill, etc.

I am his first-born son that was the last  
That wore the imperial diadem of Rome.—*Titus Andronicus*.

**Obs. 70.**—Avoid constructions in which the relative may refer either to a noun in a preceding clause, or to the entire clause.

I have before remarked, and the remark deserves to be repeated, that nothing is a more certain sign of careless composition than to make such relatives as *which* not refer to any precise expression, but carry a lower and vague relation to the general strain of what had gone before.—BLAIR.

Thus :

There was a public house next door which was a great nuisance.

Here it is doubtful whether the obnoxious fact is the existence of the public house, or its position. This ambiguity is common after a negative. Thus :

He said that he would not hear me, which I confess I had expected.

Here the meaning may be either that I had expected or that I had not expected he would.

To avoid such ambiguity the antecedent should be repeated in some new form. Thus :

There was a public house next door, the proximity of which was a great nuisance ; or,

There was a public house next door, the existence of which was a great nuisance.

He said that he would not even hear me, a favor I confess I had expected ; or,

He said that he would not even hear me, a refusal I confess I had expected.

EXERCISE XLII.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*— — an accident which broke the gates down and alarmed the neighborhood.

At four o'clock yesterday morning a lot of wood piled in a shed at No. 144 Eastern Avenue, belonging to the B. Hub Co., fell down with a loud noise which broke the gates down and alarmed the neighborhood.

The ten high windows have been filled with colored glass, which lends a subdued religious radiance to the entire interior.

Precision imports pruning the expression so as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of his idea who uses it.—**BLAIR.**

**Obs. 71.**—When the relative is either implied (in a participle), or repeated, the antecedent must often be repeated also. Thus:

But if there were in any part of the world a national church regarded as heretical by four-fifths of the nation committed to its care; a church established and maintained by the sword; a church producing twice as many riots as conversions; a church which, though possessing great wealth and power, and though long backed by persecuting laws, had, in the course of many generations been found unable to propagate its doctrines, and barely able to maintain its ground; a church so odious that fraud and violence, when used against its clear rights of property, were generally regarded as fair play; a church whose ministers were preaching to desolate walls, and with difficulty obtaining their lawful sustenance by the means of bayonets—such a church, on our principles, could not, we must own, be defended.—(*Quoted by ABBOTT.*)

**Obs. 72.**—Avoid “the sin of *which*-craft”—the employment of *which* to introduce heterogeneous clauses. Every repetition of the relative introduces a new possibility of ambiguity. (See example, page 292.)

The following example, though perfectly grammatical, is felt to be very awkward: “The King marched from Exeter into Cornwall, *which* having pacified, he returned to Winchester.” Better “*which* he pacified; he *then* returned to Winchester;” or, “*and* having pacified *this county*, he returned.”

They leave us

The dangers, the repulses, judgments, wants;

*Which* how long will you bear?—BEN JONSON.

A daring inversion. The relative is close upon the antecedent; but objection may be taken to the position of the interrogative word after it. Yet the infrequency of the construction gives it great emphasis; and we may regard it as a sudden and direct

rhetorical stroke for "*which* you will surely not bear much longer."

So glister'd the dire snake, and into fraud  
Led Eve, our credulous mother, etc.  
*Which* when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.

The Latin construction *Que quum*, etc., is apt to get translated in this form, which is not common, and should not be encouraged.—  
BAIN.

EXERCISE XLIII.—Correct the following sentences :

The sharks who prey upon the inadvertency of young heirs are more pardonable than those who trespass upon the good opinion of those who treat them upon the foot of choice and respect.—  
*Guardian*.

One may have an air which proceeds from a just sufficiency and knowledge of the matter before him, which may naturally produce some motion of his head and body, which might become the bench better than the bar.—*Guardian*.

The Earl of Falmouth and Mr. Coventry were rivals *who* should have most interest with the duke, *who* loved the earl best, but thought the other the wiser man, *who* supported Pen (*who* dis-obliged all the courtiers), even against the earl, *who* contemned Pen.—LORD CLARENDON'S *Life*.

**Obs. 73.**—The relative should be *who* or *which* where the meaning is *and he*, *and it*, etc., *for he*, *for it*, etc. ; otherwise it should be *that*, if euphony allows.

There is a marked distinction between adjective sentences where the relative *who*, etc., is divisible into the demonstrative with some conjunction, *and he*, *for he*, etc., and where the relative is indivisible.

The divisible relative merely introduces an additional fact, and the sentence it introduces may be omitted without changing the essential statement. Thus :

There were very few passengers who escaped without serious injury.

Here the meaning depends upon whether *who* may be resolved into *and they*. If it may be, the sentence may read :

There were very few passengers, and they escaped without serious injury.

In the best usage, this meaning would be expressed by the sentence as originally written.

But if the *who* may not be so resolved, the *who* should be *that*, and the sentence means that nearly all of the passengers were injured :

There were few passengers that escaped without serious injury.

This distinction in the use of *that* and of *who*, or *which*, is so closely associated with the question of inserting or omitting a comma before the relative clause, that we have treated it at length under the head of Punctuation (see pages 289-293).

**Obs. 74.**—Adjective sentences may often be improved (a) by Resolution of the Relative, (b) by Composition of the Relative, or (c) by Inversion.

Thus, (a) He was a hero, who never flinched. For *who*, substitute *and he*. (Omit the comma, and this resolution cannot occur. See page 289.)

(b) The time drew near at which the Houses must reassemble.—MACAULAY. For *at which*, substitute *when*.

(c) The man who wants food is desperate. Read, In want of food, a man is desperate.

**Obs. 75.**—Relative clauses may often be condensed into adjectives or participles.

Thus, for "The wind which never ceases," we may have "The never-ceasing wind."

(3) **Adverb Sentences** take the place of and follow the construction of an adverb (see page lxxvi). They may describe Place, Time, Manner, or Cause. They usually modify the Predicate. Thus :

Their ashes flew.  
No marble tells us whither.—COWPER.

When I said I should die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.—*Much Ado about Nothing*.

**EXERCISE XLIV.**—Fill the following blanks by inserting adverb sentences.

*Example.*—He had just completed his work when his life ended.

He had just completed his work—. It was not known— until—. We are often beset by temptation—. The righteous shall flourish—. Government has offered a reward for the rebel—. He will succeed —. The evils of war are great—. The king fitted out an expedition—.

**Obs. 76.**—Adverb sentences are sometimes abbreviated, either by omitting the verb, or by changing the verb into a participle. Thus :

When young he learned Hebrew, and though he afterward forgot it all, he died repeating the 23d Psalm.

The participial adverb phrase must be carefully distinguished from the participial adjective phrase (see page xlviij). It is necessary only to remember that the adjective always modifies a noun or pronoun, while the adverb never modifies a noun. In the sentence thus given the last four words do not describe the person, but they tell how he died, and therefore perform the function of an adverb.

**Obs. 77.**—It is in the construction of complex sentences that one has occasion most frequently to recall the principle that a sentence should not end with an unemphatic word.

Thus, "The evidence proves how kind to his inferiors he is," should read, "The evidence proves how kind he is to his inferiors."

**EXERCISE XLV.**—Improve the following sentence.

*Example.*—In my neighborhood, yesterday, while I was preaching, a young woman died in a beastly state of intoxication.

A young woman died in my neighborhood, yesterday, while I was preaching in a beastly state of intoxication.

**Obs. 78.**—Like all other sentences, a complex sen-



tence must have one, and only one principal subject of thought.

The leading editorial article of the *New York Herald of September 28, 1881*, certainly intended to represent the best literary work of which that journal was capable, began thus :

With the burial by the lake side among the maples reddening with their autumnal changes, which abound in the most beautiful city of that vast Western valley of which he was the child, the ceremonies of the memorial week since President Garfield's death have come to a close, and the people return to the ordinary tenor of their occupations.

Not to speak of the doubt resulting from the position of *which* as to whether it is the *maples* or the *changes* that abound (see page cii), the whole adjective clause introduced by *which* is unfortunate, because it distracts attention from the main idea. It has no special bearing upon General Garfield's funeral that maples are abundant in Cleveland, or that Cleveland is the most beautiful city of that valley, or that the valley itself is vast. To a majority of the readers of that journal these three statements are unfamiliar, and bring the momentary surprise of new facts. One of the three, that Cleveland is the most beautiful city, is a question of judgment, and in many minds absorbs all the interest of the sentence. Hence the unity of the sentence is destroyed. There is not one principal subject of thought, but there are two, three, four, according as these three statements are familiar and accepted.

Again :

Three or four centuries before the Christian era, on that vast territory comprised between the Ocean, the Pyrenees, the Mediterranean, the Alps, and the Rhone, lived six or seven millions of men a bestial life, enclosed in dwellings dark and low, the best of them built of wood and clay, covered with branches of straw, made in a single round piece, open to daylight by the door alone, and confusedly heaped together behind a rampart, not inartistically composed, of timber, earth, and stone, which supported and protected what they were pleased to call a town.--MABSON'S *Outlines of the History of France*.

The inversion of *lived* is unfortunate, to begin with, and the relations of the subsequent clauses are as difficult to trace as those of the children in a family where a widower marries his step-mother. What was *enclosed in dwellings dark and low*—the men or their life? "The best of them built," etc., undoubtedly refers to dwellings, and it was the dwellings that were *covered with branches of straw*, but it must have been the branches of straw that were *made in a single round piece*. No; whatever were made in a single round piece had a door in them, and that must have been the dwellings, which were also *heaped*. But it was the rampart that was *composed*; it must have been the *timber, earth, and stone* that *supported*, and it was *they* who called the collection a town. So we have the following subjects, all in one sentence :

Six or seven millions of men	—lived.
" " " " " " (probably)	—enclosed.
Dwellings	—dark.
"	—low.
" (the best of them)	—built.
" (" " " " ?)	—covered.
" (" " " " ?)	—made.
" (" " " " ?)	—open.
" (" " " " ?)	—heaped.

Rampart —composed.  
 Timber, earth, and stone —supported.  
 They (six or seven millions of men) —were pleased to call.

Here one subject and one predicate have 4 modifiers of the second class, 15 of the third class, 22 of the fourth class, 13 of the fifth class, 21 of the sixth class, 7 of the seventh class, and 3 of the eighth class. Think of a sentence having 21 modifiers of modifiers of modifiers of modifiers of modifiers!

### Once more :

Knowing on the one side so well the distinguished and masterly speakers who, to your pleased profit and to their own enhanced fame, had preceded me upon this stage of perfect speech and purest song, and had made this oration at once a high honor and a toil-fraught duty; and knowing upon the other side even better at once my native inability to stand a peer of such famous forerunners, and also the stern, distracting pressure of clamant and incessant work in this fresh field and amid a thousand thought-troubling circumstances which made adequate preparation for me an insuperable impossibility, I had twice felt it my plain duty to put away from me the delightful labor and the tempting request. —REV. JOHN I. MACINTOSH, D.D., *Oration on "The White Sunlight of Potent Words."*

Here, out of one hundred and twenty-one words, twenty-one are qualifying adjectives. The speakers are distinguished and masterly; the profit is pleased; this stage is of speech and song; and the speech is perfect, the song purest. This oration is (predicatively) not only an honor and a duty, but a high honor, and a toil-fraught duty. The speaker's inability is native, his fore-runners, though already called distinguished and masterly, must be referred to as famous, his pressure is stern and distracting, his work is clamant and incessant, his field is fresh, and his thousand circumstances are thought-troubling. Preparation is for him so meaningless that he tacks adequate upon it, and impossibility is so slight an obstacle that to give it force he puts before it insuperable. His duty is plain, his labor is delightful, the request is tempting. His first definition in etymology would be:

NOTES: A dummy to hang adjectives upon.

Now, to find fitting adjectives to cover the supposed nakedness of all these nouns (as some conceited reformers would envelop the Apollo Belvedere in a plaid ulster), requires both a broad vocabulary and a discriminating judgment. The author lacks both, or he would never talk of pleased profit and insuperable impossibility. Nor is work harder in a field because it is fresh. What he means is that the field is unaccustomed.

No heavier burden can fall upon a would-be orator than to establish a sort of ideal rhythm and conform his ideas to it, instead of letting his ideas determine the form of their expression. The same false taste that leads the author to insert superfluous adjectives, leads him to double his phrases. In this one sentence he seesaws to your profit and to their fame; perfect speech and purest song; high honor and toil-fraught duty; stern pressure and thought-troubling circumstances; delightful labor and tempting request. This results, as it always must, in nonsense. Take the last pair, for instance. Which comes first, the request or the labor? To gratify an unhealthy rhythmical taste, the speaker falls into an absurd anti-climax.

Again, look at the arrangement "Knowing on the one side so well the distinguished speakers"—which side does he know them on, the right side or the left side, the outside or the inside? Manifestly the phrase *on the one side* should have begun the sentence, instead of being thrown between *knowing* and its object. So again, *upon the other side even better at once*—what an array of adverbs, which might easily be distributed.

But we cannot go into further details. The sentence is a comprehensive embodiment of the worst errors in composition, and may be studied with abundant profit.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### **Noun Sentences, p. xciv.**

- Ex. XXXVI.—Noun, adjective, and adverb sentences, p. xcvi.  
Ex. XXXVII.—Noun sentences, p. xcvi.  
Obs. 61.—Connecting particle unnecessary, p. xcvi.  
Obs. 62.—“That” sometimes omitted, p. xcvi.  
Obs. 63.—Dependent clauses distinct from independent, p. xcvi.  
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### **Adjective Sentences, p. ci.**

- Ex. XL.—Inserting adjective sentences, p. ci.  
Obs. 64.—Relative nominative omitted, p. ci.  
Obs. 65.—“And” before adjective sentence, p. ci.  
Obs. 66.—Relative to be near antecedent, p. ci.  
Obs. 67.—Pronouns to be near nouns to which they refer, p. ci.  
Ex. XLI.—Arrangement of relative clauses, p. ci.  
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Obs. 72.—“Which-craft” to be avoided, p. ci.  
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Obs. 73.—Distinction of “Who” and “That,” p. ci.  
Obs. 74.—Resolution, composition, inversion, p. ci.  
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### **Adverb Sentences, p. cviii.**

- Ex. XLIV.—Inserting adverb sentences, p. cix.  
Obs. 76.—Abbreviation by omission or change, p. cix.  
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## SECTION THIRD.

### COMPOUND SENTENCES.

**A Compound Sentence** contains two or more principal and co-ordinate assertions ; as, I came, saw, conquered.

NOTE.—For convenience, “if” sentences, often called complex, are here treated as compound.

**Obs. 79.**—The members of a compound sentence must have a natural and perceptible connection in thought.

Thus, The procession was very fine, and nearly two miles long, as was also the report of Dr. Perry, the chaplain.

Here the reporter mentally connected the procession and the report by thinking of them both as *fine*, and endeavoring to say so. But, except as an expression of approval, the adjective *fine* has no common application to a procession and to a report, and though no ambiguous clause intervened, the members of the sentence would be incongruous. The last clause should therefore be a separate sentence, something like this : The report of Dr. Perry, the chaplain, was able and comprehensive.

He expired, . . . having enjoyed, by the benefit of his regimen, a long and healthy life, and a gentle and easy death.—JOHNSON'S *Life of Martin*.

This extraordinary person not only enjoyed his death, but first died and then expired.—HALL.

At the upper Methodist conference, at Marion, the other day, the Rev. B. W. Coates, in making a report of his stewardship, said he had passed three very successful and pleasant years at Le Clair, having had an unusual number of funeral services during that time.—*Stoux City Journal*.

Of course judgment will differ as to whether the connection of thought in two sentences is sufficient to warrant their combination into one. For instance :

I am an early riser, but my wife is a Presbyterian.—A. WARD.

"Have you ever been much at sea?"

"Why, no, not exactly: but my brother married a canal-captain's daughter."

"Were you ever abroad?"

"Why, no, not exactly; but my mother's maiden name was French."

Marshal Soult was accustomed to say of a Spanish painting which he had compelled two persons to surrender on pain of death: "That picture I value highly; it saved the lives of two persons." This is almost equal to the school-boy's statement in a composition, that pins have saved the lives of a good many people; being asked how, he replied, "By their not swallowing them."

Prisoner at the bar, nature has endowed you with a good education and respectable family connections, instead of which you go around about the country stealing ducks.

A Western paper announced as follows: "Mr. Maguire will wash himself before he assumes the office of sheriff." This made Maguire angry, and he demanded a retraction, which the paper made thus: "Mr. Maguire requests us to deny our statement that he will wash himself before he assumes the office of sheriff." Oddly enough, this only enraged Maguire the more. Some people are so hard to please.

It is not the form of the compound sentence that makes the inconsecutiveness of two thoughts manifest. This may be just as marked in successive single sentences. Thus:

One of the passengers on the ill-fated *Metis*, at the time of the disaster, was an exceedingly nervous man, who, while floating in the water, imagined how his friends would acquaint his wife of his fate. Saved at last, he rushed to the telegraph office and sent this message: "Dear P—, I am saved. Break it gently to my wife!"—*Springfield Republican*.

The Hon. Newton Bateman, LL.D., has accepted the presidency of Knox College, Galesburg, Ill., but will not enter upon its duties till near the close of the academic year. *This gives great satisfaction to the friends of the college.*—*College Courier*.

The church was erected during the ministry of the Rev. Elihu Whitcomb; and the dedication sermon was preached February 12, 1806. It was ninety feet in length and fifty-four in breadth.—*Newspaper in Saco, Me.*

A young lady went to a drug store for a prescription.

"How much?" she asked.

"Fifty cents," said the clerk.

"But I have only forty-five cents with me," replied the customer; "can't you let me have it for that?"

"No, ma'am," said the clerk, "but you can pay me five cents when you come in again."

"But suppose I were to die?" said the lady, jocularly.

"Well, it wouldn't be a very great loss," was the smiling response.

The smiling clerk gathered from the indignant flush on the lady's face that he had been misunderstood, but before he could assure her that it was the little balance that would be no great loss, she was beyond the sound of his voice.

**EXERCISE XLVI.**—Resolve the following sentences into simpler ones, so far as necessary to preserve unity of thought.

*Example.*—The dog, which had previously bitten his wife, died on the Monday following.

The dog had previously bitten his wife, and on the Monday following it died.

The town farm-house and alms-house have been carried on the past year to our reasonable satisfaction, especially the alms-house, at which there have been an unusual amount of sickness and three deaths.

Any person driving over this bridge in a faster pace than a walk shall, if a white person be fined five dollars, and if a negro, receive twenty-five lashes, half the penalty to be bestowed on the informer.

Wanted, by an apothecary, an assistant to take an interest in a small first-class trade and in a quiet family.

Even Mrs. H. B. Stowe, in her great work, "Uncle Tom," and in other writings, uses this phrase incessantly, and although, perhaps, not exactly a model of composition, her authority is of some weight, as she puts it into the mouth of educated as well as of illiterate people.—SCHELE DE VERE.

Chaucer seems to affect monosyllabic rhymes in verse, and indeed seldom employs double ones, unless we count as such words in *e final*, which perhaps we should do, for there is no doubt but this letter was sounded in Chaucer's time, as it is now in the cognate languages and in French verse.—MARSH.

There are a great many different kinds of trees, some furnishing us with wood for common purposes, such as flooring for our houses and frames for the windows, while others afford us more beautiful wood, which, when polished, is made into tables and chairs and various articles of furniture.

Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a

day may bring forth ; and for the same reason, despair not of to-morrow, for it may bring forth good as well as evil ; which is a ground for not vexing thyself with imaginary fears ; for the black cloud, which is regarded with so much dread, may pass harmlessly by, or may find thee, before it breaks, the tenant of that lowly mansion which no storms can touch.

The Britons, daily harassed by the Picts, were forced to call in the Saxons for their defence, who, after having repelled the invaders, turned their arms against the Britons themselves, drove them into the most remote and mountainous parts of the kingdom, and reduced the greater part of the island under their dominion, so that in the course of a century and a half the country became almost wholly Saxon in customs, religion, and language.

Last year a paper was brought here from England, called "A Dialogue between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mr. Higgins," which we ordered to be burned by the common hangman, as it well deserved, though we have no more to do with His Grace of Canterbury than you have with the Archbishop of Dublin, whom you tamely suffer to be abused openly and by name by that paltry rascal of an observator ; and lately upon an affair wherein he had no concern ; I mean the business of the missionary of Drogheda, wherein an excellent primate was engaged, and did nothing but according to law and discretion.—SWIFT.

The usual acceptation takes Profit and Pleasure for two different things, and not only calls the followers or votaries of them by the several names of Busy or Idle men, but distinguishes the faculties of the mind that are conversant about them, calling the operations of the first Wisdom, and of the other Wit ; which is a Saxon word, used to express what the Spaniards and Italians call *Ingenio*, and the French *Esprit*, both from the Latin ; though I think Wit more particularly signifies that of Poetry, as may occur in remarks on Runic language.—SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE.

To this succeeded the licentiousness which entered with the Restoration, and from infecting our religion and morals fell to corrupt our language (which last was not likely to be much improved by those who at that time made up the court of King Charles the Second ; either such who had followed him in his banishment, or who had been altogether conversant in the dialect of those fanatic times, or young men who had been educated in the same company) ; so that the court (which had used to be the standard of propriety and correctness of speech) was then (and, I think, hath ever since continued) the worst school in England for that accomplishment ; and so will remain till better care be taken in the education of our young nobility, that they may set out into the world with some foundation of literature in order to qualify them for patterns of politeness.—SWIFT.

**Obs. 80.**—In the members of a compound sentence the construction must not be changed without good reason.

## EXERCISE XLVII.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—I should have sent the brooches before, but have been unwell.

The brooches would have been sent before, but have been unwell.—*Note from Jeweller to Dean Alford.*

Mrs. A.'s compliments to Mrs. B., and begs to say that C. lived with her a year and found her respectable, steady, and honest.

R. C. begs to apologize for not acknowledging P. O. order at the time (but was from home), and thus got delayed, misplaced, and forgotten.

Gentlemen's materials made up and waited on at their own homes.—*Tailor's Advertisement.*

It requireth few talents to which most men are not born, or at least may not acquire.—SWIFT.

A Methodist church in Baltimore advertised that it would pay ten dollars reward "for the apprehension and conviction of the person or persons who defaced the parsonage steps, or for any mutilation of church property."

Tickets once nipped and defaced at the barriers, and the passengers admitted to the platform, will be delivered up to the company in the event of the holder subsequently retiring, and cannot be recognized for readmission. (Here if "having admitted passengers" be substituted for "the passengers admitted," the subject will be the same throughout, and though the sentence will be awkward it will be perspicuous.)

The following story went the round of the German papers: On the morning of the recent eclipse Capt. von S —, of the — Fusiliers, issued the following verbal order to his company, through his Sergeant-Major, to be communicated to the men after forenoon parade:

This afternoon a solar eclipse will take place. At 3 o'clock the whole company will parade in the barrack yard. Fatigue jackets and caps. I shall explain the eclipse to the men. Should it rain, they will assemble in the drill shed.

The Sergeant-Major, having set down his commanding officer's instructions in writing, as he had understood them, formed the company into hollow square at the conclusion of the morning drill, and read his version of the order to them, thus:



This afternoon a solar eclipse will take place in the barrack yard by order of the Captain, and will be attended by the whole company, in fatigue jackets and caps. The Captain will conduct the solar eclipse in person. Should it rain, the eclipse will take place in the drill shed.—*N. Y. Sun.*

**Obs. 81.**—Correlative conjunctions, as *where not only* precedes *but, but also,* or *but even,* should each be followed by the same part of speech.

Thus, "The sportsman was not only hunting all the morning, but all the afternoon," should read, "The sportsman was hunting not only all the morning, but all the afternoon."

**EXERCISE XLVIII.**—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—I estimated myself neither high nor lowly.

I neither estimated myself high nor lowly.—*DE QUINCEY.*

He not only gave me advice but also help.

Lothair was unaffectedly gratified at not only receiving his friends at his own castle, but under these circumstances of intimacy.—*DISRAELI.*

He not only spoke forcibly but tastefully, and not only this, too, before a small audience, but in a large public meeting also, and not only were his speeches successful, but also worthy of success.

You are not obliged to take any money which is not gold or silver; not only the halfpence or farthings of England, but of any other country.—*SWIFT.*

Aristotle would be, indeed, the sorriest plagiarist on record, were the thefts believed of him by his Oxford votaries not false only, but ridiculous.

Psychical states that often recur in a given order not only become increasingly coherent, but the transitions from each to the next become more rapid.

Because here the similitude is not only pleasant, but the pattern more perfect.—*BLAIR.*

This class is believed to be not only very limited in number, but of this number very few ever commit capital crime.—*N. A. Review.*

Would neither have been so neat nor so clear as it is by the present construction.—*BLAIR.*

Because we neither know the nature of our own ideas nor of the soul.—BLAIR.

A petty constable will neither act cheerfully or wisely. (A double mistake : neither must always be followed by nor.)

By greatness I do not only mean the bulk of any single object, but the largeness of the whole view.—ADDISON.

They will, too, not merely interest children, but grown-up persons.—*Westminster Review*.

Their language frequently amounts not only to bad sense, but nonsense.—*Kirkham's Grammar*.

For position of the adverb *not*, when alone, see page lxxviii.

**Obs. 82.**—In general, only the same parts of speech should be united by conjunctions in the same construction.

Thus, Campbell says : “ Personal relations are of various kinds. They are consanguinity, affinity, friendship, acquaintance, being fellow-citizens, countrymen, of the same name, religion, occupation, and innumerable others.” Here we have first four abstract nouns ; then a participle followed by (1) two class nouns, (2) three preposition phrases, and finally a pronoun. The sentence is not an easy one to reconstruct, but the following form escapes the violation of unity :

They are of consanguinity, affinity, friendship, acquaintance, citizenship, nationality, surname, religion, occupation, and innumerable others.

EXERCISE XLIX.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—Their success or failure indicated, etc.

Their success or otherwise indicated, etc.—*Westminster Review*.

His style is awkward and slovenly, that of his antagonist remarkably terse and clear, and bearing witness to a sensitiveness of ear and taste which are glaringly deficient in his opponent.—*Westminster Review*.

We saw it thrown through the window and flat on the ground.

She was a woman of taste, and wearing a green velvet dress.

The fact is well known and obvious.

**Obs. 83.**—The use of “ *And* ” indicates that the new statement is superadded to, and distinct from, the pre-

vious ; its omission, usually that the new statement is in substance the same as the previous, or a mere varying of the expression.

Thus, "Ideas quickly fade, and often vanish quite out of the understanding," would be better, "Ideas quickly fade ; they often vanish quite out of the understanding."

He was deeply conversant with the ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them ; there is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors whom he has not translated in Sejanus and Catiline.

The *and* in the first member is strictly correct ; borrowing boldly is a fact additional to being conversant with. Equally proper is the omission of the conjunction at the commencement of the second member, which repeats in greater detail the same act of borrowing.—BAIN.

The mechanism of sentences may assist energy further by the conscious use or omission of the conjunctive beginning. I have just observed that the word "and" probably begins more sentences in the productions of inexperienced writers than any other in the language. This act gives importance to intelligent criticism of all forms of conjunctive beginning. Let it be observed, then, that the conjunctive beginning is forcible if the succession of thought requires it. Often it does so. Something is needed to express or to hint the fact of continuity. The idea of inference, or of other sequence, or of qualification, or of contrast, is to the point. Instinctively, then, you link sentence to sentence by beginning the second of the two with "but" or "and," or an adverbial term which has a conjunctive effect, like "yet" or "nevertheless." What is the exact force of the conjunctive beginning ? It is to bridge over the period preceding. Sometimes energy requires that.

But without such demand of thought, the conjunctive beginning is meaningless, and therefore vapid. Did you never hear an inferior conversationalist begin sentence after sentence with the corrupt formula "and-er" ? That indicates momentary vacuity of mind. The speaker is on the hunt for something to say. The "and-er" has no conjunctive force. Not once in a score of times does the connection demand a reminder of what went before. This mongrel expression is only an interjectional expletive, by which the speaker holds on to the right of utterance while his mind is exploring. To compare it with a thing on a level with it in dignity, it is like a travelling-bag which you leave to represent you when for a moment you leave your seat in a rail-car. Precisely such is the needless use of the conjunctive beginning in written discourse. In the succession of thought it has no conjunctive force. Therefore style it is not. It is language not freighted by sense.

Oral delivery may be sadly weighted by the conjunctive beginning. Punctuation may remedy it to the eye in print ; but, orally delivered, such sentences lose their only sign of separation. The period is bridged over when you do not mean it, and your style runs together. Two, even three, possibly four, short sentences, which for force of utterance ought to be short, and ought to be uttered with crisp delivery, are stretched into one long one ; made long by that most flattering expedient of composition, a mechanical coupling of ideas. The conjunctive beginning, therefore, should be intelligently used. Use it

when you mean it. Drop it when it is only the sign of vacuum. Common etiquette requires you to conceal a yawn.—PHELPS.

**Obs. 84.**—Avoid the use of "*Or*" where there is neither disjunction nor alternation.

Thus, "This angelic coronet shed light alike upon the chambers of a cottage or a palace." Here the use of *alike* shows that the cottage and the palace are united in the idea,—not contrasted. The sentence should read, "The angelic coronet shed light alike upon the chambers of a cottage and a palace."

Again, "Notwithstanding all the attempts which have been made to explain this away or even to turn it to the poet's credit, it is surely a great defect in him."

Here, if the author intends to produce emphasis by the use of *or even*, he might say, "to explain this away, nay more, to turn it to the poet's credit."

Had the first clause been negative, *nor even* would have produced emphasis. In the following quotations from Shakspeare (the obsolete double negative having been removed), it will be seen that *nor ever* is a much stronger expression than *and never*.

I never was, nor ever will be false.  
This England never did, nor ever shall,  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror.

But this emphasis does not extend to *or ever*.

"Passengers are cautioned *not* to open a carriage door *or* to put their heads out of the windows, when the train is in motion." The placing of *not* here commands both infinitives, as is meant. But *or* is an awkward and unmanageable word; it supposes a preceding *either*, and does not tally well with a previous *not*. Better to repeat the *not*, or else make it *neither* and *nor*: *not* to open a carriage door, *and not* to put their heads; " *neither* to open, *nor* to put." Otherwise: "While the train is in motion, passengers should *neither* open the carriage doors, *nor* put their heads out of the windows."—BAIN.

EXERCISE L.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*— "—— arising from our hopes and our fears."

All that part of our happiness arising from our hopes or our fears depends on imagination.

**Obs. 85.**—Make it always clear whether “*Or*” is used alternatively or disjunctively.

In its alternative use *or* introduces a synonymous or explanatory expression; as, “He is a lieutenant, or subordinate officer.” In its disjunctive use, it introduces a contradictory expression; as, “He is a lieutenant or a captain.”

It will be noticed that in its disjunctive use, *or* is followed by the article repeated. Campbell’s rule is as follows: ‘If the first noun follows an article, or a preposition, or both, the article or the preposition, or both, should be repeated before the second, when the two nouns are intended to denote different things; and should not be repeated when they denote the same thing. If there be neither article nor preposition before the first, and if it be the intention of the writer to use the particle *or* disjunctively, let the first noun be preceded by *either*, which will infallibly ascertain the meaning. On the contrary, if, in such a dubious case, it be his design to use the particle as a copulative to synonymous words, the piece will rarely sustain a material injury by his omitting both the conjunction and the synonyma.’

Bain gives several illustrations, as follows:

In a sentence already quoted (page cxx) there occurs the phrase—“there is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors.” The weakening effect of the use of *or* for synonymous phrases is felt here. But for our knowledge of the meanings, we might easily suppose that *poet* and *historian* were two names for the same person or class. To bring out the alternation of meaning or subject, we must say, “scarcely either a poet or a historian;” “scarcely a Roman author, either poet or historian.” Or put in positive form—“nearly all the Roman authors, poets and historians alike.”

“They who have no real feeling always pitch their expressions too high or too low.” The *or* is inadequate to the occasion. There is an alternative contrast amounting to opposition. Say, “either too high, or else too low.” More decided thus: “They that want real feeling never pitch their expressions at the right point; they are either too high, or else too low.”

“The thing was done by force or fraud.” If *force* and *fraud* are

to be marked out as two distinct facts, one of them (and not the other) being the instrument assigned, we should at least repeat the preposition—"by force or by fraud;" the alternation being further improvable, as in the other instances, by *else*.

[It will be observed that Bain uses the term *alternative* where the distinction above made would require *disjunctive*. He speaks of alternative in the sense above given as "a synonymous, or explanatory alternative."]

It may be added that the distinction may be further made in punctuation. The expression introduced by *or* alternative, being explanatory, would be set off by commas (see page 271). Where this does not sufficiently mark the character of the phrase, it may be put in parenthesis. Thus:

They were both much more ancient among the Persians than Zoroaster (or Zerdusht).

As for such animals as are mortal (or noxious), we have a right to destroy them.

**Obs. 86.**—"If" clauses should be avoided except emphatically to express that the action of the predicate hangs upon an uncertain event.

Thus, "If stones are dropped into water, they will sink," is more simply expressed, "Stones sink in water." "If you will come, I shall be delighted," is better thus: "Your coming will delight me." "If it would rain, we should get much good;" read, "Rain would do much good."

On the other hand, to say, "If he is guilty, his punishment will be severe," expresses a doubt of the issue which disappears in, "His guilt will be followed by severe punishment."

Frequently the imperative may with advantage be substituted for an *if* clause. Thus: "If you search through history, you will find—" may become, "Search through history and you will find—" etc.

**EXERCISE LI.**—Vary the conditional expression in the following sentence.

*Example.*—To be large and liberal, the scholar's mind must come in contact with other minds.

The mind of the scholar, if you would have it large and liberal, must come in contact with other minds.—LONGFELLOW.

**Obs. 87.**—In conditional sentences, the “*if*” clause must be kept distinct. It should usually come first. Thus in

“The lesson intended to be taught by these manœuvres will be lost, if the plan of operations is laid down too definitely beforehand, and the affair degenerates into a mere review.”

The meaning may be, either,

(1) If the plan of operations is laid down too definitely beforehand, the lesson intended to be taught by these manœuvres will be lost, and the affair degenerates into a mere review ;

or,

(2) If the plan of operations is laid down too definitely beforehand, and the affair degenerates into a mere review, the lesson intended to be taught by these manœuvres will be lost.

On the general principle of Climax (see page cxxx) the “*if*” clause should come first.

Every one will see the flatness of “Revenge thy father’s most unnatural murder, if thou didst ever love him,” as compared with the suspense that forces an expression of agony from Hamlet in—

*Ghost.* If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

*Hamlet.* O, God !

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

The effect is sometimes almost ludicrous when the consequent is long and complicated, and when it precedes the antecedent or “*if*-clause.”

I should be delighted to introduce you to my friends, and to show you the objects of interest in our city, and the beautiful scenery in the neighborhood, if you were here.

Where the “*if*-clause” comes last, it ought to be very emphatic: “if you were only here.”

The introduction of a clause with “*if*” or “*though*” in the

middle of a sentence may often cause ambiguity, especially when a great part of the sentence depends on "that."

His enemies answered that, for the sake of preserving the public peace, they would keep quiet for the present, though he declared that cowardice was the motive of the delay, and that for this reason they would put off the trial to a more convenient season.

So, The Secretary is a traitor, if he *really* wrote the letter in question.—ABBOTT.

**Obs. 83.**—Where two different forms of the verb are connected by a conjunction, such parts of the tense-forms as are not common to both must be repeated in full.

Thus, we may say, I am surprised that he has *acted* as he has [acted] ; but not, I am surprised that he should *act* as he has [acted].

EXERCISE LII.—Fill out the improper ellipses in the following sentences :

*Example.*—This dedication may serve for almost any book that has been, is, or shall be published.

This dedication may serve for almost any book that has, is, or shall be published.

I shall do all I can to persuade others to take the same measures for their care which I have.—*Guardian*.

The forms of English are so few, its syntax so simple, that they are learned by use before the age of commencing classical study.—MARSH.

We are too apt to imagine that what is, always has, and always will be.—*Too Much Alone*.

But you will bear it as you have so many things.—J. T. COLERIDGE.

I am anxious for the time when he will talk as much nonsense to me as I have to him.—LANDOR.

But the problem is one which no research has hitherto solved, and probably never will.—H. HOLLAND.

Failing, as others have, to reconcile poetry and metaphysics, he succeeds better in speculations inspired by the revelations of lens and laboratory.—E. C. STEDMAN.



No introduction has, nor in any probability ever will, authorize that which common thinkers would call a liberty.—SHELLEY.

Some part of this exemption and liability may, and no doubt is, due to mental or physical causes in the unhappy or fortunate individual.—*Spectator*.

He ridicules the notion that truth will prevail ; it never has, and it never will prevail.—LESLIE STEPHEN.

I never have, and never will, attack a man for speculative opinions.—BUCKLE.

**Obs. 89.**—The copula must be repeated when the second of two connected attributes is not closely associated with the first in meaning, especially if it is contrasted in meaning. (See Obs. 12, page xxxiv. ; Obs. 36, page lvii.)

Thus, They will admit that he was a great poet, but deny that he was a great man. Here *will* should be repeated before *deny*.

**Obs. 90.**—The verb *to be* must not be made to do duty at once as a principal verb and as an auxiliary.

Thus, The doctor was a very great favorite, and received with much respect and honor.—THACKERAY. Say *was received*.

*Waste are* those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed.—LONGFELLOW.

**Obs. 91.**—The verb should usually be repeated after *as, than*, etc. ; and in general wherever it is necessary to distinguish the subject from the object.

Thus : "I esteem him more highly than Charles," may mean : (1) I esteem him more highly than I do Charles ; (2) I esteem him more highly than Charles esteems him.

Sometimes the brevity of Antithesis (see page cxxxvii) must be sacrificed to clearness ; as, Flattery gains friends ; truth, foes.

**Obs. 92.**—It is better to repeat the verb itself than to represent it by *do* or *did*. (See page lxiv.)

Thus, I have furnished the house exactly according to your

fancy, or, if you please, my own; for I have long since learned to like nothing but what you *do*.—*Spectator*.

**DONE** is frequently a very great offender against grammar. *To do* is the act of *doing*. We see people write, "I *did* not speak yesterday so well as I wished to *have done*." Now what is meant by the writer? He means to say that he did not speak so well as he then wished, or was wishing, to *speak*. Therefore the sentence should be "I did not speak yesterday so well as I wished to *do* it," that is to say, to do or to perform the act of *speaking*.

Take great care not to be too free in your use of the verb *to do* in any of its times or modes. It is a nice little handy word, and, like our oppressed *it*, it is made use of very often when the writer is at a loss for what to put down. *To do* is to *act*, and, therefore, it never can, in any of its parts, supply the place of a neuter verb. "How do you *do*?" Here *do* refers to the state, and is essentially passive or neuter. Yet, to employ it for this purpose is very common. Dr. Blair, in his twenty-third Lecture, says: "It is somewhat unfortunate that this number of the *Spectator* did not end, as it might have *done*, with the former beautiful period." That is to say, *done* *it*. And then we ask, Done what? Not the act of ending, because in this case there is no action at all. The verb means *to come to an end, to cease, not to go any further*. The same verb *to end* is sometimes an active verb: "I *end* my sentence;" then the verb *to do* may supply its place; as, "I have not ended my sentence so well as I might have *done*;" that is, *done* *it*; that is, *done*, or performed, *the act of ending*. But the number of the *Spectator* was no actor; it was expected to perform nothing; it was, by the Doctor, wished to have *ceased to proceed*. "Did not end as it very well might have *ended*." . . . This would have been correct; but the Doctor wished to avoid the repetition, and thus he fell into bad grammar. "Mr. Speaker, I do not feel so well satisfied as I should have *done* if the Right Honorable Gentleman had explained the matter more fully." To feel satisfied is—when the satisfaction is to arise from conviction produced by fact or reasoning—a senseless expression; and to supply its place when it is, as in this case, a neuter verb by *to do*, is as senseless. Done *what*? Done the act of feeling. "I do not feel so well satisfied as I should have *done*, or executed, or performed the act of feeling!" What incomprehensible words!—COBBETT.

**EXERCISE LIII.**—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—"— or if they take it," etc.

For these latter will either not scruple to take a false oath, or if they do, will satisfy their conscience by various evasions or equivocations.—**WHATELY**.

That any firm, tradesmen, manufacturers, agents, quacks, perfumers, or whatever else they may be, pay a settled sum, no more and no less, for advertising, I do not believe now, whatever I may have done before commencing my labors.—**SAMPSON**, *History of Advertising*.

**Obs. 93.**—In many compound sentences the subject must be repeated, to prevent ambiguity, especially after a

relative standing as subject, or where the relative is the subject of several verbs.

Thus, "He professes to be helping the nation, which in reality is suffering from his flattery, and (he? or it?) will not permit any one else to give it advice."—ABBOTT.

When denied in one member and asserted in the other, the subject should of course be stated in both members. Thus:

No line of it, however seemingly discursive, should be aimless, but [every line] should have some relation to the matter in hand.—JAMES PAYN.

A similar principle may require the repetition of the predicate, or of the entire statement, in a changed form. Thus:

Retaining the color of their uniform, they have replaced an ugly shako by one altogether as smart and soldier-like [as the former shako was ugly?].—*London Telegraph*.

There are those who never reason on what they should do, but what they have done, as if reason had her eyes behind, and could only see backward.—FIELDING.

**Obs. 94.**—When there are several verbs at some distance from a conjunction on which they depend, the conjunction should be repeated. Thus:

When we look back upon the havoc that two hundred years have made in the ranks of our national authors, and, above all, when we refer their rapid disappearance to the quick succession of new competitors, we cannot help being dismayed at the prospect that lies before the authors of the present day. [Here, if *when* be omitted, the clause becomes parenthetical.]—ABBOTT.

**Obs. 95.**—Corresponding conjunctions, like *not only, but also*, add clearness, as the construction assures the

reader that the sense will be incomplete until the full stop is reached. But when unnecessary, they encumber and stiffen the sentence.

Thus, Abbott gives the following sentence :

You must take this extremely perilous course, in which success is uncertain, and failure disgraceful, as well as ruinous, or else the liberty of your country is endangered.

Here the meaning is liable to be misunderstood till the reader has gone half through the sentence. Write, "Either you must," etc., and the reader is, from the first, prepared for an alternative.

**Obs. 96.**—The omission of conjunctions sometimes gives forcible abruptness ; as, You say this ; I deny it.

For it is a remarkable peculiarity of language that the omission of a connecting particle should sometimes serve to make objects appear more closely connected ; and that the repetition of it should distinguish and separate them in some measure from each other. — BLAIR.

**Obs. 97.**—Short and unemphatic clauses should not be introduced unexpectedly at the end of long sentences, except to produce a special effect.

After a long and tedious journey, the last part of which was a little dangerous, owing to the state of the roads, we arrived safely at York, which is a fine old town.

When the short final clause is intended to be unexpectedly emphatic, it comes in appropriately, with something the sting of an epigram (see page cxxvi). Thus :

The old miser said that he should have been delighted to give the poor fellow a shilling, but most unfortunately he had left his purse at home—a habit of his.

Suspense naturally throws increased emphasis on the words for which we are waiting, *i.e.*, on the end of the sentence. It has been pointed out above that a monotony of final emphasis is objectionable, especially in letter-writing and conversation.—ABBOTT.

With these writings young divines are more conversant than

with those of Demosthenes, who by many degrees excelled the other, at least as an orator.—SWIFT.

EXERCISE LIV.—Correct the following sentence.

*Example.*—As this is not the case, the faulty order of words cannot properly be considered as rendering the sentence ambiguous, but can be considered as rendering it obscure.

As this is not the case, the faulty order of the words cannot properly be considered as rendering the sentence ambiguous, but obscure.—CAMPBELL.

**Obs. 98.**—Clauses that are grammatically connected should be kept as close together as possible.

Thus, in the following :

The result of these observations appears to be in opposition to the view now generally received in this country, that in muscular effort the substance of the muscle itself undergoes disintegration.

Here it is difficult to tell whether the theory of “disintegration” is (1) “the result,” or, as the absence of a comma after “be” would indicate, (2) “in opposition to the result of these observations.” If (1) is intended, add “and to prove” after “country;” if (2), insert “which is” after “country.”

There is an excessive complication in the following :

“It cannot, at all events, if the consideration demanded by a subject of such importance from any one professing to be a philosopher, be given, be denied that,” etc.

Where a speaker feels that his hearers have forgotten the connection of the beginning of the sentence, he should repeat what he has said—*e.g.*, after the long parenthesis in the last sentence he should recommence, “it cannot, I say, be denied.” In writing, however, this license must be sparingly used. (See page cvi.)

A short parenthesis, or modifying clause, will not interfere with clearness, especially if antithesis be used, so as to show the connection between the different parts of the sentence, *e.g.* :

“A modern newspaper statement, *though probably true*, would be laughed at if quoted in a book as testimony; but a letter of a court gossip is thought good *historical* evidence if written some centuries ago.”

Here, to place “*though probably true*” at the beginning of the sentence would not add clearness, and would impair the emphasis

of the contrast between "a modern newspaper statement" and "the letter of a court gossip."—ABBOTT. (But see below.)

**Obs. 99.**—The first clause should prepare for the second, the second for the third, etc., in an increasing scale of interest and importance.

Whately remarks, in a sentence that itself illustrates the principle he states :

If a sentence be so constructed that the meaning of each part can be taken as we proceed (though it be evident that the sense is not brought to a close), its length will be little or no impediment to perspicuity ; but if the former part of the sentence convey no distinct meaning till we arrive nearly at the end (however plain it may then appear), it will be on the whole deficient in perspicuity ; for it will need to be read over or thought over a second time, in order to be fully comprehended ; which is what few readers or hearers are willing to be burdened with.

It is with discourses as with bodies, which ordinarily owe their principal excellence to the assemblage and just proportion of their members, in such a way that although one member, separated from the others, may have nothing remarkable about it, still all of them together do not fail to make a perfect body.—LONGINUS.

The following is an instance of defective combination :

A modern newspaper statement, though probably true, would be laughed at, if quoted in a book as testimony ; but the letter of a court gossip is thought good historical evidence, if written some centuries ago.

A rearrangement of this, in accordance with the principles advocated above, will be found to increase the effect. Thus :

Though probably true, a modern newspaper statement quoted in a book as testimony, would be laughed at ; but the letter of a court gossip, if written some centuries ago, is thought good historical evidence.

By making this change, some of the suspensions are avoided and others shortened ; while there is less liability to produce premature suggestions. The passage quoted below from "Paradise Lost" affords a fine instance of a sentence well arranged ; alike in the priority of the subordinate members, in the avoidance of long and numerous suspensions, and in the correspondence between the order of the clauses and the sequence of the phenomena described, which, by the way, is a further prerequisite to easy comprehension, and therefore to effect.

As when a prowling wolf,  
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve  
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,  
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold ;  
Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash  
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,  
Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,  
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles :  
So clomb the first grand thief into God's fold ;  
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.

The habitual use of sentences in which all or most of the descriptive and limiting elements precede those described and limited, gives rise to what is called the inverted style [see page xxi] ; a title which is, however, by no means confined to this structure, but is often used where the order of the words is simply unusual. A more appropriate title would be the *direct style*, as contrasted with the other, or *indirect style* : the peculiarity of the one being, that it conveys each thought into the mind step by step with little liability to error ; and of the other, that it gets the right thought conceived by a series of approximations.

The superiority of the direct over the indirect form of sentence, implied by the several conclusions that have been drawn, must not, however, be affirmed without reservation. Though, up to a certain point, it is well for the qualifying clauses of a period to precede those qualified ; yet, as carrying forward each qualifying clause costs some mental effort, it follows that when the number of them and the time they are carried become great, we reach a limit beyond which more is lost than is gained.\*

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\* A sentence, for example, begins with a series of *ifs* ; perhaps a dozen lines are occupied with expanding the conditions under which something is affirmed or denied ; here you cannot dismiss and have done with the ideas as you go along ; all is hypothetical ; all is suspended in air. The conditions are not fully to be understood until you are acquainted with the dependency ; you must give a separate attention to each clause of this complex hypothesis, and yet, having done that by a painful effort, you have done nothing at all ; for you must exercise a reacting attention through the corresponding latter section, in order to follow out its relations to all parts of the hypotheses which sustained it. In fact, under the rude, yet also artificial character of newspaper style, each separate monster period is a vast arch, which, not receiving its key-stone, not being locked into self-supporting cohesion until you nearly reach its close, imposes of necessity upon the unhappy reader all the onus of its ponderous weight through the process of its construction.—DE QUINCEY.

Other things equal, the arrangement should be such that no concrete image shall be suggested until the materials out of which it is to be made have been presented. And yet, as lately pointed out, other things equal, the fewer the materials to be held at once, and the shorter the distance they have to be borne, the better. Hence in some cases it becomes a question whether most mental effort will be entailed by the many and long suspensions, or by the correction of successive misconceptions.

This question may sometimes be decided by considering the capacity of the persons addressed. A greater grasp of mind is required for the ready comprehension of thoughts expressed in the direct manner, where the sentences are anywise intricate. To recollect a number of preliminaries stated in elucidation of a coming idea, and to apply them all to the formation of it when suggested, demands a good memory and considerable power of concentration. To one possessing these, the direct method will mostly seem the best; while to one deficient in them it will seem the worst. Just as it may cost a strong man less effort to carry a hundred-weight from place to place at once, than by a stone at a time, so to an active mind it may be easier to bear along all the qualifications of an idea, and at once rightly form it when named, than to first imperfectly conceive such idea, and then carry back to it, one by one, the details and limitations afterward mentioned. While conversely as, for a boy, the only possible mode of transferring a hundred-weight is that of taking it in portions, so, for a weak mind, the only possible mode of forming a compound conception may be that of building it up by carrying separately its several parts.

That the indirect method—the method of conveying the meaning by a series of approximations—is best fitted for the uncultivated, may indeed be inferred from their habitual use of it. The form of expression adopted by the savage, as in “Water give me,” is the simplest type of the approximate arrangement. In pleonasm, which are comparatively prevalent among the uneducated, the same essential structure is seen, as, for instance, in “The men, they were there.” Again, the old possessive case—“The king, his crown,” conforms to the like order of thought. Moreover, the fact that the indirect mode is called the natural one,



implies that it is the one spontaneously employed by the common people—that is, the one easiest for undisciplined minds.

There are many cases, however, in which neither the direct nor the indirect structure is the best, but where an intermediate structure is preferable to both. . . .

Before dismissing this branch of our subject, it should be further remarked that, even when addressing the most vigorous intellects, the direct style is unfit for communicating ideas of a complex or abstract character. So long as the mind has not much to do, it may be well able to grasp all the preparatory clauses of a sentence, and to use them effectively; but if some subtlety in the argument absorb the attention, if every faculty be strained in endeavoring to catch the speaker's or writer's drift, it may happen that the mind, unable to carry on both processes at once, will break down, and allow the elements of the thought to lapse into confusion.—HERBERT SPENCER.

*Examples* (see also page cxxiv):

With thee conversing, I forget all time.—MILTON.

Formed by thy converse, happily to steer

From grave to gay, from lively to severe.—POPE.

Were we as eloquent as angels, we should please some men, some women, and some children much more by listening than by talking.—COLTON.

EXERCISE LV.—Give strength to the following sentences by arranging the members according to the natural order of circumstances.

*Example.*—Improvvidence is the parent of poverty and dependence.

Improvvidence is the parent of dependence and poverty.

Gentleness ought to diffuse itself over our whole behavior, to form our address, and to regulate our speech.

Ambition creates seditions, wars, discords, hatred, and shyness.

Charity breathes long-suffering to enemies, courtesy to strangers, habitual kindness toward friends.

A virtuous and pious life will prove the best preparation for immortality and death.

In this state of mind, every employment of life becomes an oppressive burden, and every object appears gloomy.

Virtue supports in sickness, comforts in the hour of death, strengthens in adversity, and moderates in prosperity.

The study of astronomy elevates and expands the mind.

Since man is on his very entrance into the world the most helpless of all creatures ; since he must at last be laid down in the dust from which he was taken ; and since he is for a series of years entirely dependent on the support and protection of others ; how vain and absurd does it appear that such a being should indulge in worldly pride !

That morning he had laid his books, as usual, on the table in his study.

I shall never consent to such proposals while I live.

Many changes are now taking place in the vegetable world, under our immediate notice, though we are not observant of them.

By those accustomed to the civilization and the warm sun of Italy, it must have been felt as a calamity to be compelled to live, not only in a cold, uncultivated country, but also among a barbarous people.

Let us not conclude, while dangers are at a distance, and do not immediately approach us, that we are secure, unless we use the necessary precautions to prevent them.

You may set my fields on fire, and give my children to the sword ; you may drive myself forth a houseless, childless beggar, or load me with the fetters of slavery ; but you never can conquer the hatred I feel to your oppression.

Meanwhile Gloucester, taking advantage of the king's indolent disposition, resumed his plots and cabals.

In all speculations upon men and human affairs, it is of no small moment to distinguish things of accident from permanent causes.

At Bath, the remains of two temples, and of a number of statues, have been dug up, in laying the foundations of new streets and squares.

**Obs. 100.**—A sudden descent in interest is called Bathos.

Thus, " To gossip is a fault ; to libel, a crime ; to slander, a sin." She was a woman of many accomplishments and virtues, grace-

ful in her movements, winning in her address, a kind friend, a faithful and loving wife, a most affectionate mother, and she played beautifully on the piano-forte.

A clergyman, preaching to a country congregation, used the following persuasive arguments against swearing: "Oh, my brethren, avoid this practice, for it is a great sin, and, what is more, it is ungentle."

It follows that if Beauty hath her habitation in our universe, living in the setting sun, or in "eve's one star," or sitting on the rainbow that spans the heavens, or walking over the green fields and tree-clad hills, or wading through the running brook,

Making sweet music with the enamelled stones—

if she dwelleth in the lily's cup or is mantled in the iris-hued mist that presides over the cataract's roar, or floateth in the fragrant air—she doth so because man is.—B. A.

Thus o'er the dying lamp th' unsteady flame  
Hangs quivering on a point, leaps off by fits,  
And falls again, as loth to quit its hold.  
Thou must not go; my soul still hovers o'er thee,  
And can't get looe.—ADDISON, *Cato*.

When the sudden descent (anti-climax) is intentional, the effect is humorous, or ironical.

Go, wondrous creature, mount where science guides;  
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides;  
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run;  
Correct old Time, and regulate the Sun;  
Go, soar with Plato in th' empyreal sphere,  
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;  
Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule.  
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool.—POPE.

**Obs. 101.**—A sudden anti-climax may have the effect of wit, by the collocation of ideas that at first seem incongruous. Thus:

The Russian grandees came to court dropping pearls

}

and diamonds. —  
*Climax.*  
and vermin.—*Anti-climax.*

These two nations were divided by mutual fear

{ and the bitter  
remembrance of  
recent losses.—  
*Climax.*  
and mountains.  
—*Anti-climax.*

**Obs. 102.**—Antithesis adds force and clearness, but must not be excessive. Thus :

All the pleasing illusions which made power gentle, and obedience voluntary, are now to be destroyed.

There is here a kind of formula :

Gentleness : power :: spontaneousness : obedience.—ABBOTT.

That kind of period which hath most vivacity is commonly that wherein you find an antithesis in the members, the several parts of one having a similarity to those of the other, adapted to some resemblance in the sense. The effect produced by the corresponding members is like that produced in a picture when the figures of the group are not all on a side, with their faces turned the same way, but are made to contrast each other by their several positions. Besides, this kind of periods is generally the most picturesque. There is in them not only that original light which results from the expression when suitable, but there is also that which is reflected reciprocally from the opposed members. The relation between these two is so strongly marked, that it is next to impossible to lose sight of it. The same quality makes them easier also for the memory.—CAMPBELL.

Mind is invisible, but you may find

A method here to let me see your mind.—MONTGOMERY, *in an autograph album.*

On parent knees, a naked, new-born child,  
Weeping thou sat'st while all around thee smiled ;  
So live, that sinking on thy last long sleep,  
Thou then may'st smile, while all around thee weep.

—*From the Arabic, by SIR W. JONES.*

A lady complained to me that of her two handmaidens one was absent-minded, and the other absent-bodied.—EMERSON.

The reasoning maid, above her sex's dread,  
Had dared and read, and dared to say she read.

Speech was given to the ordinary sort of men, whereby to communicate their mind ; but to wise men, whereby to conceal it.—  
SOUTH.

Speech is silvern, but silence is golden.

He twice forsook his party ; his principles, never.

Prosperity gains friends, but adversity tries them.

Quintilian's criticism of a certain author was, that his greatest excellence consisted in having no faults, his greatest fault in having no excellencies.

Persecution is not wrong because it is cruel, but is cruel because it is wrong.

Precocious children make stupid persons ; as early-risers are conceited in the morning and vapid all the afternoon.

The best speculation the market holds forth  
To any enlightened lover of pelf,  
Is to buy —— up at the price he is worth,  
And sell him at that he puts on himself.—MOORE.

EXERCISE LVI.—Complete the antithesis in each of the following sentences.

*Example.*—Pride hardens the heart, but humility softens it.

Pride hardens the heart, but humility—. Pride is the offspring of ignorance—. To err is human ; to forgive—. He is young in years, but—. If we have no regard for our own character, we should, at least—. The manner of speaking is as important as the—. Almost every object has a bright, as well as—. Silence your opponent with reason, not with—. Man is intended for two distinct states of being. His first life is transient ; his second— ; the first corporeal ; the second— ; the former confined to time ; the latter bounded—. Philosophy makes us wiser ; —makes us better men. The former makes us the objects of human admiration ; the latter of—regard. That insures us temporal happiness, but this—.

EXERCISE LVII.—Correct the following sentences.

*Example.*—The question arises whether in these extremely violent cases it is wiser to resort to seclusion in padded rooms, with neither clothing nor bedding, or to use the muff and camisole. In

adopting the first-named method it becomes necessary to employ additional attendants, and they must at best use force to restrain, and, besides, they will be continually in peril of life or limb. Physicians would, we believe, decide in favor of the latter method as being most humane and conducive to the comfort, safety, and health of the patient, and therefore to be preferred from considerations of kindness and humanity to the insane.

In these cases of extreme violence, the question presents itself whether it is wiser to resort to seclusion without clothing and bedding in padded rooms and employ additional attendants, who at best would have to use physical force to restrain, with constant danger of broken ribs or limbs, or resort to the muff and the camisole. When left to the physician to determine their use, we believe the latter modes of restraint would be most humane, most conducive to the comfort, safety, and health of the patient, hence to be preferred as a question of humanity and kind treatment of the insane.

I beg of you, never let the glory of our nation, who made France tremble, and yet has the gentleness to be unable to bear opposition from the meanest of his own countrymen, be calumniated in so impudent a manner as in the insinuation that he affected a perpetual dictatorship.—**STEELE.**

The best way to bring a clever young man, who has become skeptical or unsettled, to reason, is to make him *feel* something in any way. Love, if sincere and unworldly, will in nine instances out of ten, bring him to a sense and assurance of something real and actual; and that sense alone will make him *think* to a sound purpose, instead of dreaming that he is thinking.—**COLERIDGE.**

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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- Obs. 79.—Connection of the members, p. cxiii.  
Ex. XLVI.—Division into simple sentences, p. cxv.
- Obs. 80.—Construction not to be changed, p. cxvi.  
Ex. XLVII.—Heterogeneous construction, p. cxvii.
- Obs. 81.—Correlatives followed by same part of speech, p. cxviii.  
Ex. XLVIII.—Parts of speech after correlatives, p. cxviii.
- Obs. 82.—Conjunctions unite same parts of speech, p. cxix.  
Ex. XLIX.—Heterogeneous construction, p. cxix.
- Obs. 83.—“And” introduces new statement, p. cxix.
- Obs. 84.—Avoid “Or” where no alternation, p. cxxi.  
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- Obs. 85.—“Or” disjunctive or alternative, p. cxxii.
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- Obs. 89.—Copula to be repeated, p. cxxvi.
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- Obs. 99.—Climax, p. cxxxi.  
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**PART II.**  
**CONVERSATION**





## PART II.

### CONVERSATION.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### GOOD BREEDING.

All are not gentlemen by birth ; but all may be gentlemen in openness, in modesty of language, in attracting no man's attention by singularities, and giving no man offence by forwardness ; for it is this, in matter of speech and style, which is the sure mark of good taste and good breeding.—DEAN ALFORD.

**Awkwardness** in conversation usually arises from a nervous dread of saying the wrong thing. A sudden question discomposes. No answer is at hand. To consider and devise an answer would make too long a pause, even if the mind were collected, while in fact to think coolly under the awaiting eye of the questioner is impossible. So the victim begins a reply without a hint as to how he shall complete it, stammers, blunders, and retires despairingly.

A shy person not only *feels* pain but *gives* pain ; but, what is the worst, he incurs blame for a want of that rational and manly confidence which is so useful to those who possess it, and so pleasant to those who witness it. I am severe against shyness, because it looks like a virtue ; and because it gives us false notions of what the real virtue is.—SYDNEY SMITH.

**Recognized Phrases.**—There are few such emergencies for which society has not provided. To devise an original greeting for each of our acquaintances would be a task

quite beyond us; but it is conventionally agreed that all shall be contented with "How do you do?" When we know this form of greeting, and know that it will be considered sufficient, our mental energy, no longer paralyzed by the dread of being found at a loss, enables us to grope about for a more special salutation, assured that if we fail to find it we have at our tongue's end a formula adequate to the occasion. The first requisite to swimming well is to be assured one is not going to drown.

A diner-out of long experience has left succeeding generations heir to these two rules :

1. Always know what it is conventional to say ;
2. Say something else.

A man meeting another grasped his hand cordially and exclaimed in tones of polite but uncertain recognition, "Mr. Brown, I believe?" "If you believe that," calmly replied the stranger, whose name was Hamilton, "you'll believe anything." Mr. Brown recognized and responded to the humor of the reply, and a pleasant acquaintance followed.

Frank confession, from its rarity, often produces the effect of wit. Thus a man in whose honor a dinner was given, responding to the toast offered him, declined to make a speech on the ground that a morbid desire for originality restrained him from saying that this was the proudest moment of his life, and it really didn't occur to him to say anything else.

The conventionalities of society are comparatively few in number and easily acquired. How little of the phrase of common intercourse is of modern origin is amusingly shown in the still familiar forms laid down in Swift's "Complete Collection of Genteel and Ingenious Conversations," and even in the "Colloquies" of Erasmus. It is not so much that the words are stereotyped, though there is considerable uniformity of expression. But it is understood, for instance, that when one meets an acquaintance, one is to greet him, and show interest in him by inquiries

as to himself, his family, his friends. These inquiries are to the well-bred man a matter of course, and are made through habit without thought or effort. Meantime one has recovered from one's surprise, has recalled what one knows of the acquaintance, his position, his history, the circumstances under which one has met him, and is ready without a break in the conversation to suggest some topic likely to be of interest. Were there no established forms of greeting, but were the two required from the first word to evolve the proper thing to say and the proper way to say it, we may be sure such encounters would be awkward and dreaded.

Erasmus (1526) gives a multitude of forms for all ordinary occasions, between all sorts of persons, a fair proportion of which are still in use. Thus for "Farewell," at parting, we have: "Fare ye all well. Farewell. Take care of your health. Take a great care of your health. I bid you good-by. Time calls me away, fare ye well," etc., etc.

Swift (1730) in playful sarcasm published a collection of "at least a thousand shining questions, answers, repartees, replies and rejoinders, fitted to adorn every kind of discourse that an assembly of English ladies and gentlemen, met together for their mutual entertainment, can possibly want;" he boldly affirmed that "the whole genius, humor, politeness, and eloquence of England" were summed up in it, the last six or seven years not having added above nine valuable sentences; he further faithfully assured the reader that there was not a single witty phrase in the collection which had not received the stamp and approbation of at least one hundred years, so that all might be relied upon as "genuine, sterling, and authentic."

As might be expected, the collection is of shallow and slang phrases, which one might think ephemeral. Yet no small proportion may be heard at this day wherever people are gathered in idle mood. Some of the commonest are the following:

IN ST. JAMES' PARK. \*

*Col. Atwell.* How do you do, Tom?

*Tom Noverout.* Never the better for you.

*Col.* Why, every one as they like, as the good woman said when she kissed the cow.

## IN LORD SMART'S HOUSE.

*Never.* Come, a penny for your thought.

*Miss Notable.* It is not worth a farthing; for I was thinking of you.

*Lady Answera'l.* Well, but sit while you stay; 'tis as cheap sitting as standing.

*Lady Smart.* Go, run girl, and warm some fresh cream.

*Betty.* Indeed, ma'am, there's none left; for the cat has eaten it all.

*Lady S.* I doubt it was a cat with two legs.

*Lady A.* Pray, my lord, did you walk through the Park in the rain?

*Lord Sparkish.* Yes, madam, we were neither sugar nor salt; we were not afraid the rain would melt us.

*Col.* Indeed, madam, that's a lie.

*Lady A.* . . . I don't lie; I sit.

*Miss.* Pray, colonel, let me see that box.

*Col.* Madam, there's never a C on it.

*Miss.* Maybe there is, colonel.

*Col.* Ay, but May bees don't fly now, miss.

*Never.* Well, miss, I'll think on this.

*Miss.* That's rhyme, if you take it in time.

*Never.* What! I see you are a poet.

*Miss.* Yes, if I had but the wit to show it. . . . But pray, Mr. Neverout, what lady was that you were talking with in the side-box last Tuesday?

*Never.* Miss, can you keep a secret?

*Miss.* Yes, I can.

*Never.* Well, miss, and so can I.

*(A puff of smoke comes down the chimney.)*

*Lady A.* Lord, madam, does your ladyship's chimney smoke?

*Col.* No, madam; but they say smoke always pursues the fair, and your ladyship sat nearest.

*Lady S.* Madam, do you love bohea tea?

*Lady A.* Why, madam, I must confess I do love it, but it does not love me.

*Never.* Methinks, miss, I don't much like the color of that ribbon.

*Miss.* Why, then, Mr. Neverout, do you see, if you don't much like it, you may look off it. . . . Pray, colonel, make me a present of that pretty penknife.

*Col.* Not for the world, dear miss; it will cut love.

*Miss.* My comfort is, 'twill be all one a thousand years hence.

*Never.* Why, miss, you are so cross I could find it in my heart to hate you.

*Miss.* With all my heart; there will be no love lost between us.

*Lady S.* Colonel, methinks your coat is too short.

*Col.* It will be long enough before I get another, madam. . . . Miss, you have got my handkerchief; pray, let me have it.

*Lady S.* No; keep it miss: for they say possession is eleven points of the law.

*Col.* Will your ladyship be on the Mall to-morrow night?

*Lady S.* No, that won't be proper; you know to-morrow's Sunday.

*Col.* What then, madam? they say the better the day, the better the deed. . . . Dick Lubber said to Mrs. Talkall, the other day: Madam, you can't cry to a goose. Yes, but I can, said she; and, egad, cry'd be full in his face.

*Never.* Pray, madam, smoke miss, yonder, biting her lips and playing with her fan.

*Miss.* Who's that takes my name in vain?

(*She runs up to them and falls down.*)

*Lady A.* Why, miss, I wish you may not have broke her ladyship's floor.

*Never.* Miss, come to me, and I'll take you up.

*Miss.* Pray, Mr. Neverout, keep your breath to cool your porridge: you measure my corn by your bushel.

*Never.* Indeed, miss, you lie—

*Miss.* Did you ever hear anything so rude?

*Never.* I mean you lie—under a mistake.

*Smart.* Why, Tom, you are high in the mode.

*Never.* My lord, it is better to be out of the world than out of the fashion.

AT DINNER.

*Co'.* Here, miss; they say fingers were made before forks, and hands before knives.

(*Neverout eats a piece of pie and burns his mouth.*)

*Smart.* What's the matter, Tom? you have tears in your eyes, I think; what dost cry for, man?

*Never.* My lord, I was just thinking of my poor grandmother! she died just this very day seven years.

(*Miss takes a bit and burns her mouth.*)

*Never.* And pray, miss, why do you cry too?

*Miss.* Because you were not hanged the day your grandmother died.

*Spark.* What do you think of a little house well filled?

*Sir J.* And a little land well tilled?

*Col.* Ay; and a little wife well willed?

*Smart.* (*Carving a partridge.*) Well, one may ride to Rumford upon this knife, it is so blunt.

*Lady A.* My lord, I beg your pardon; but they say an ill workman never had good tools.

*Smart.* Sir John, what are you doing?

*Sir J.* I must do as the beggars do, go away when I have got enough.

*Col.* Miss, I thank you; and, to reward you, I'll come and drink tea with you in the morning.

*Miss.* Colonel, there's two words to that bargain.

*Col.* Why, my lord, you see miss has no mercy; I wish she were married; but I doubt the gray mare would prove the better horse.

Any one desiring to revel in the thousand more of these memorized witticisms, will find them in any complete edition of Swift's works. Not until there are fewer persons who rely for utterance upon their memory instead of upon their wit, will set phrases be restricted to their proper sphere—the verbal courtesies that express good-will where it is impracticable to express anything more.

**Usages of Society not Unreasonable.**—It is therefore of importance that one should be familiar with the phrases customary to polite society; and, indeed, this knowledge should extend to all its usages. No one can talk well while doubtful whether he is behaving properly,

nor will his best talking avail him with those whose eyes are fixed on the social enormities of which he is guilty.

Sainte-Beuve was noted for his charm in conversation, but he never received a second invitation from the Empress Eugénie, because at his first breakfast he unfolded his napkin and laid it over both knees, instead of dropping it carelessly over his left knee, and broke his egg into the cup, instead of eating it from the shell. At first thought it seems ridiculous to insist upon such nicety in social usages; but, after all, these rules have reason behind them, and seem unreasonable only to those who either cannot perceive their purpose, or are careless of the comfort in little things of those about them. It takes many of these trifles to make perfection in social intercourse; but this perfection is no trifle, and must not be underestimated. *Insolent* (*in solens*, Latin) is literally only *unaccustomed*, and one is indeed insolent who presumes to mingle with others without regarding the ways and habits to which they have been accustomed.

Defect in manners is usually the defect of fine perceptions. Men are too coarsely made for the delicacy of beautiful carriage and customs. It is not quite sufficient to good breeding, a union of kindness and independence. We imperatively require a perception of, and a homage to, beauty in our companions. Other virtues are in request in the field and work-yard, but a certain degree of taste is not to be spared in those we sit with. I could better eat with one who did not respect the truth or the laws than with a sloven and unrepresentable. Moral qualities rule the world, but at short distances the senses are despotic.—EMERSON.

Hardness is a want of minute attention to the feelings of others. It does not proceed from malignity or carelessness of inflicting pain, but from a want of delicate perception of those little things by which pleasure is conferred or pain excited.

A hard person thinks he has done enough if he does not speak ill of your relations, your children, or your country; and then, with the greatest good-humor and volubility, and with a total inattention to your individual state and position, gallops over a thousand fine feelings and leaves in every step the marks of his hoofs upon your heart.

Analyze the conversation of a well-bred man who is clear of the besetting sin of hardness; it is a perpetual homage of polite good-nature. He remembers that you are connected with the Church, and he avoids (whatever his opinions may be) the most distant reflections on the Establishment. He knows that you are admired, and he admires you as far as is compatible with good breeding. He sees that, though young, you are at the head of a large establishment, and he infuses into his manner and conversation that respect which is so pleasing to all who exercise authority. He leaves you in perfect good-

humor with yourself, because you perceive how much and how successfully you have been studied.

In the meantime, the gentleman on the other side of you (a highly moral and respectable man) has been crushing little sensibilities and overlooking little discriminations, and without violating anything which can be called a rule, or committing what can be denominated a fault, has displeased and dispirited you from wanting that fine vision which sees little things, and that delicate touch which handles them, and that fine sympathy which this superior moral organization always bestows.

So great an evil in society is hardness, and that want of perception of the minute circumstances which occasion pleasure or pain.—SYDNEY SMITH.

**Good Manners Requisite to Success.**—Besides, however one may feel disposed in principle toward these particular requirements, he must in practice yield to them if he would be successful in conversation. For the first requisite of this art is adaptation to the person one talks with, not only in subject and in expression, but in personal appearance and manners. A French book on rhetoric begins with directions for the care of the teeth. No well-bred person could listen comfortably to a fellow-guest, however wise, who ate with noisy greediness.

We talk much of utilities, but 'tis our manners that associate us. In hours of business we go to him who knows, or has, or does this or that which we want, and we do not let our taste or our feeling stand in the way. But this activity over, we return to the indolent state, and wish for those we can be at ease with; those who will go where we go, whose manners do not offend us, whose social tone chimes with ours. When we reflect on their persuasive and cheering force; how they recommend, prepare, and draw people together; how, in all clubs, manners make the members; how manners make the fortune of the ambitious youth; that, for the most part, his manners marry him, and, for the most part, he marries manners; when we think what keys they are, and to what secrets, what high lessons and inspiring tokens of character they convey, and what divination is required in us for the reading of this fine telegraph, we see what range the subject has, and what relations to convenience, power, and beauty.—EMERSON.

**Good Manners never Ostentatious.**—It is another application of the same principle that one should



not be ostentatious of fine manners. Ill-breeding is never more offensive than when, by doing things in an obtrusively different way, it seeks to make others feel that they have done a thing improperly. The same motive which leads one to observe how well-bred persons do things, in order to avoid giving well-bred people offence, leads one to avoid doing things at all, or even to do things improperly, when to do them properly would make some one present feel that he had committed a solecism.

As manners go, few things are to well-bred people more disagreeable than to convey food to one's mouth with a knife; and yet if one were dining with an elderly person, likely to be sensitive, who had begun the meal by eating with his knife, or if one were a guest at a table where there were only two-tined steel forks, and an attempt to eat with them might make the hostess blush because she could not furnish silver, it would be one's duty to conceal as much as possible that he was eating with his fork, or even to eat with his knife. No mere conventionality must interfere with the broad principle that it is the part of a well-bred person to put those about him at their ease.

**Observe Conventionalities.**—The first lesson to impress upon those who would excel in conversation is to be watchful of conventionalities. No written precepts can inculcate them. They are subject to constant development, and increase in complexity as one mingles with those more and more fitted by nature and position to give prominence to the courtesies of life. But with a disposition to put others, and to leave others, at their ease, even at personal sacrifice, with an observant eye, and here and there with a hint from older persons, one may learn so to comport one's self that one's manner will never make others uncomfortable—an essential prerequisite to success in conversation.

Emerson defines manners as the happy ways of doing things, once a stroke of genius or of love, but now hardened by usage into habit. How much more graceful is this way of putting it than the corresponding passage in Swift: "Therefore, I insist that good sense is the principal foundation of good manners; but because the former is a gift which very few among men are possessed of, therefore, all the civilized nations of the world have agreed upon fixing some rules upon common behavior best suited to their general customs or fancies, as a kind of artificial good sense, to supply the defects of reason."

Ill-breeding, says the Abbe Belgarde, is not a single defect, but it is the result of many. It is sometimes a gross ignorance of decorum, or a stupid insolence which prevents us from giving to others what is due to them. It is a peevish malignity which inclines us to oppose the inclinations of those with whom we converse. It is the consequence of a foolish vanity which has no complaisance for any other person; the effect of a proud and whimsical humor, which soars above all the rules of civility; or, lastly, it is produced by a melancholy turn of mind, which pampers itself with a rude and disobliging behavior.—FIELDING.

### *Sydney Smith's Definition of "A Nice Person."*

A nice person is neither too tall nor too short, looks clean and cheerful, has no prominent feature, makes no difficulties, is never misplaced, sits bodkin, is never foolishly affronted, and is void of affectations.

A nice person helps you well at dinner, understands you, is always gratefully received by young and old, Whig and Tory, grave and gay.

There is something in the very air of a nice person which inspires you with confidence, makes you talk, and talk without fear of malicious misrepresentation; you feel that you are reposing on a nature which God has made kind, and created for the benefit and happiness of society. It has the effect upon the mind which soft air and a fine climate have upon the body.

A nice person is clear of little, trumpery passions, delights in talent, shelters humility, pardons adversity, forgives deficiency, respects all men's rights, never stops the bottle, is never long and never wrong, always knows the day of the month, the name of everybody at table, and never gives pain to any human being.

If anybody is wanted for a party, a nice person is the first thought of; when the child is christened, when the daughter is married—all the joys of life are communicated to nice people; the hand of the dying man is always held out to a nice person.

A nice person never knocks over wine or melted butter, does not tread upon the dog's foot, or molest the family cat, eats soup without noise, laughs in the right place, and has a watchful and attentive eye.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### GOOD BREEDING.

- AWKWARDNESS** :—Its source, and its disadvantages, p. 3.  
Escaped by acquaintance with conventionalities, pp. 3-7.  
Recognized forms few, and easily acquired, p. 4.  
Specimens from Erasmus, and Swift, pp. 5-7.
- USAGES OF SOCIETY** not unreasonable, pp. 7-9.  
Defect in manners is defect in fine perceptions, p. 8.
- GOOD MANNERS REQUISITE TO SUCCESS**, p. 9.  
Never ostentatious, pp. 9, 10.  
Dependent on watchfulness, p. 10.  
The happy ways of doing things, p. 11.  
Selfishness of ill manners, p. 11.  
Sydney Smith's "Nice Person," p. 11.

### SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

- Do you approve the conduct of the young prelate on page 92 ?  
Do you justify the remarks made in the anecdotes on pages 265, 266, 268 ?
- Was the editor justified in rebuking the remark on the weather, as told on pp. 253, 254 ?
- What do you think of the action of Mrs. Stephen A. Douglass upon the following occasion ? A constituent, unaccustomed to polite society, was dining at her house, and let fall a tea-cup of exquisite design and great value. As it shivered into pieces, he was greatly disturbed, but Mrs. Douglass, taking up her own cup, remarked lightly, "It is curious how easily these cups break : see, I can crush it like an egg-shell," and did so crush it.
- What do you think of the following remark of Emerson's ? "The basis of good manners is self-reliance (and *vice versa*). Necessity is the law of all who are not self-possessed. Those who are not self-possessed obtrude and pain us. Some men appear to feel that they belong to a Pariah caste. They fear to offend, they bend and apologize, and walk through life with a timid step. As we sometimes dream that we are in a well-dressed company without any coat, so Godfrey acts ever as if he suffered from some mortifying circumstance. The hero should find himself at home, wherever he is ; should impart comfort by his own security and good-nature to all beholders."

## CHAPTER II.

### TABLE-TALK.

No fair adversary would urge loose *table-talk* in controversy, and build serious inferences upon what was spoken in jest.—ATTERBURY, quoted in Johnson's Dictionary.

**Readiness in Light Conversation.**—In Doré's illustrations of La Fontaine's Fables, the generalization of the fox who found the vines too high for him represents two seedy cavaliers jeering at the social enjoyment of a company from which they are excluded. The hit is happy, for no other discomfiture is oftener excused by the sneer, "Sour grapes." Particularly common is it to affect contempt for readiness in that free and easy form of conversation, which from the place that most frequently affords it opportunity, is known as "Table-talk"—the primary object being rather social than intellectual, rather the promotion of pleasant feeling than a search for new truth.

The awkward man reminds himself that a great tragedian, smiling at his insignificance in a social gathering, boasted that, "wanting in all things, he was not the less Corneille;" that Rousseau, who in talking with Hume "kindled often a degree of heat which looked like inspiration," was yet in general conversation "remarkably trite, never warmed by a word of fancy or eloquence;" that Addison was as shy among strangers as he was delightful in his talk with a chosen companion, and used to say that though he could draw a check for a thousand pounds, he never carried a guinea in his pocket.

But surely to walk the streets penniless when one has a thousand pounds in the bank shows deplorable lack of judgment. Such

a man may be congratulated upon his possession of resources, but not upon his use of them. Rich as he is, he may miss the greatest opportunity of his life because he has not an omnibus fare in his pocket, nor will his chagrin be the less that he might just as well have had with him a thousand omnibus fares.

The parallel holds. Two richly gifted men, who would keenly have enjoyed a conversation, may ride together for hours in awkward silence, for want of the mutual recognition which a little small-talk would have developed. Not seldom are well-filled minds stagnant for want of an outlet. Many a man goes through life a hermit because he has not learned how to begin a conversation.

A well-known modern astronomer, attending a wedding, passed up to offer his congratulations, shook hands in a solemn sort of way, and uttered not a word.

"Why didn't you say something to them?" queried his wife, respectfully.

"I don't know," replied the absorbed professor; "I didn't think I had any new facts to impart."

**Table-Talk an Art.**—Failure in table-talk results oftenest from lack of appreciation that it is an art. Poems, orations, essays, even letters may be perfected by acquaintance with the principles of rhetoric, but surely anybody can say what he means: that is one mistake. Another is at the other extreme: that the agreeable talker is born, not made; that conversation is a matter not of education but of instinct.

The difficulty of literature is not to write, but to write what you mean; not to affect your reader, but to affect him precisely as you wish. This is commonly understood in the case of books or set orations; even in making your will or writing an explicit letter, some difficulty is admitted by the world. But one thing you can never make the Philistine natures understand; one thing, which yet lies on the surface, remains as unseizable to their wits as a high flight of metaphysics—namely, that the business of life is mainly carried on by means of this difficult art of literature, and

according to a man's proficiency in that art shall be the freedom and the fulness of his intercourse with other men. Anybody, it is supposed, can say what he means ; and, in spite of their notorious experience to the contrary, so people continue to suppose.

An orator makes a false step ; he employs some trivial, some absurd, some vulgar phrase ; in the turn of a sentence he insults, by a side wind, those whom he is laboring to charm ; in speaking to one sentiment he unconsciously ruffles another in parenthesis ; and you are not surprised, for you know his task is delicate and filled with perils. "O frivolous mind of man, light ignorance." As if yourself, when you seek to explain some misunderstanding or excuse some apparent fault, speaking swiftly, and addressing a mind still recently incensed, were not harnessing for a more perilous adventure ; as if yourself required less tact and eloquence ; as if an angry friend or a suspicious lover were not more easy to offend than a meeting of indifferent politicians. Nay, and the orator treads in a beaten round ; the matters he discusses have been discussed a thousand times before ; language is ready-shaped to his purpose ; he speaks out of a cut and dry vocabulary. But you—may it not be that your defence reposes on some subtlety of feeling, not so much as touched upon in Shakspeare, to express which, like a pioneer, you must venture forth into zones of thought still unsurveyed, and become yourself a literary innovator ? For even in love there are unlovely humors ; ambiguous acts, unpardonable words may yet have sprung from a kind sentiment. If the injured one could read your heart, you may be sure that he would understand and pardon ; but, alas, the heart cannot be shown—it has to be demonstrated in words. Do you think it is a hard thing to write poetry ? Why that is to write poetry, and of a high, if not the highest order.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

**Direct Preparation.**—It would surprise most people to know how often the brilliant talk at a dinner-party is the result of direct preparation. Mr. Jones, for instance, has acquired his reputation for impromptus through a habit of considering beforehand who will be present, what they will be likely to say, and what hits will prove felicitous. Even those who do not consciously anticipate a spe-

cial conversation by mental rehearsal, often elaborate their striking expressions, and store them away for future use. Suggestions of new analogies, happy illustrations, plausible paradoxes, occur to most of us. The conversational artist seizes them, turns them over and over in his mind till they are moulded into their happiest form, perhaps even experiments with them upon unimportant listeners, and finally employs them just at the right time to produce the maximum of effect. And why not? Daniel Webster confessed that his noble figure of the British drum-beat following the setting sun around the world was conceived at Quebec, months before he had occasion to use it, and that the very words employed were selected after hours of experiment.

But it is not alone in polishing the brilliants of conversation that art is required. If one's speech with strangers be easy and continuous, one at least escapes frequent embarrassment, though the thoughts be trivial.

It may be added that facility in conversation with strangers is rarely acquired in mature life. One's social habits are usually fixed before thirty, and one's intercourse with his fellows will be free and natural, or restrained and difficult, very much according to the readiness in table-talk which he acquires in his early years.

**Seek Rather to Please than to Shine.**—The customary phrase of society serves as an armor against embarrassment, and thus leaves one at liberty to give full play to intellect and to sympathy. It is questionable which of the two will be of more service. "He is a master of monologue," said Madame de Staël of Coleridge, "but he does not know what dialogue is." There was a spice of malice in the remark that rarely fails to accompany the impression that one is peremptorily compelled to be a lis-

tener.\* "Do not think I am sought after for my dramas," said Racine to his son; "Corneille composes nobler verses than mine, but no one notices him, and he pleases only by the mouth of actors. I never allude to my works when with men of the world, but I amuse them about matters they like to hear. *My talent with them consists not in making them feel that I have any, but in showing them that they have.*"

The apprehension of society as an idea is one of the distinctions between gentility and the commonalty. The younger members of the working-classes have more intercourse with each other out of family life than their betters; but they have not the idea of a social sphere instilled into their minds as it is upon those whose early observation is set to work—of a sphere where they are to be viewed on all sides and judged by a general opinion. The necessity for self-repression makes room for thought which those children miss who have no formalities to observe and no customs to respect—who blurt out every irrelevance, who interpose at will with question and opinion as it enters the brain. It is this unrestraint which lays the foundation of that self-centred view of life to be observed in the socially untrained. It is by listening, not by talking, that sympathy is acquired—that intellectually makes men companionable. This abandonment of old restraints of which we are jealous, may be one of the reasons why conversation as an art is going out. Children don't learn to talk by chattering to one another and saying what comes uppermost; neither does reading suffice to this end single-handed. Good talk should first be recognized as such in others. Attention is the most influential tutor in the fitting use of the tongue. Where we see good talk disregarded by a party of young people, there, we may be sure, the chances of their ever shining socially are small indeed. Mere listening with intelligence involves an exercise of mental speech. Not, of course, that we would confine children to the act of attention; but good

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\* Sydney Smith said of Macaulay: "Yes, I agree, he is certainly more agreeable since his return from India. His enemies might have said before (though I never did so) that he talked rather too much; but now he has occasional flashes of silence that make his conversation perfectly delightful."



talk cannot be maintained under interruption, and observant silence opens the pores of the mind as impatient demands for explanation never do.—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

**Choice of Subject.**—This complaisance makes one careful to avoid subjects that might offend, and especially to refrain from questions it might be unpleasant to answer. "Don't talk of ropes to a man whose father has just been hung," is an old proverb. Nor should one speak to an invalid of health, to a bankrupt of integrity, to an ignoramus of scholarship, to bereaved parents of children. Especially should one shrink from boasting of any possession from which the other is necessarily cut off.

"I hope your dinner agreed with you?" queried a host, solicitously.

"That is a matter which lies entirely between my Maker and myself," was the solemn reply.

A person took the liberty to question Alexander Dumas rather closely concerning his genealogical tree.

"You are a quadroon, M. Dumas?" he began.

"I am, sir."

"And your father?"

"Was a mulatto."

"And your grandfather?"

"A negro," hastily answered the dramatist, whose patience was waning.

"And may I ask what your great-grandfather was?"

"An ape, sir," thundered Dumas; "my pedigree begins where yours terminates."

**Discretion in Personal Remarks.**—As one setting out in a sail-boat glances ahead over the water to avoid in time any rocks or shoals before him, so one's first thought in beginning a conversation should be a review of what one knows of one's companion, with a view to escape blundering upon an untimely topic. And as one sails freely in

the open sea, but slowly and cautiously as he approaches an unknown shore, so in talking with a stranger the skilful converser keeps among life's generalities, and bears himself warily as subjects are suggested that may have personal application.

*Punch* delights to illustrate how hazardous in a mixed company are criticisms upon individuals.

"Pray who is that awkward creature by the piano?" asks a stranger of a chance companion.

"That is my sister," is the grim reply.

"Oh, I don't mean the handsome woman to the left!" cries the first speaker, hoping to retrieve himself, "but that red-haired Amazon to the right, whose dress makes up in boldness of color for its scantiness of material."

"That, sir, is my wife."

It is a peculiarity of this sort of blundering that the victim, having taken a false step, is apt to flounder and mire himself the deeper.

"Who is that distressingly homely woman in the corner?" asks one, and when he gets the reply, "She happens to be my mother, sir," he exclaims in confusion, "I really beg your pardon; it was so stupid of me; the resemblance is very marked."

Of a stranger at an art-exhibition a lady inquires:

"Pray, how did they come to admit such a picture as that?"

"I am sorry you don't like it, madam, for it is mine."

"Why, you don't mean to say you bought it?"

"Oh, no; I only painted it."

"I beg ten thousand pardons; but you mustn't mind me, *I only repeat what everybody says.*"

Now and then one has the tact gracefully to escape.

"Do tell me who is that woman on the ottoman, that looks like a Chinese," asks a lady of the gentleman with whom she is promenading.

"That is my wife, madam; and pray might I inquire in what particulars she resembles a Chinese?"

"Why, in the exquisite smallness of her feet. You must introduce me."

Not long after his removal from the House of Commons to the House of Lords, Disraeli met a brother peer on the street, who asked him how he liked the change.

"Like it?" exclaimed Disraeli, forgetting himself for the moment and blundering out the truth, "I feel as if I were dead or buried alive."

Then seeing the expression of discomfiture on the nobleman's face, he added hastily, with a courtly bow and an irresistible smile—"and in the land of the blessed."

But such tact, however desirable, is rare, and it is the safest rule, when one has heedlessly injured the sensibilities of another to manifest no perception of it, but quietly and naturally to change the subject, taking especial pains to select one that shall gratify one's companion in some other direction, if it cannot repair the hurt he has suffered in this.

It is true that ill-natured remarks like those just quoted are in themselves reprehensible. But even if one is scrupulous to speak no ill of one's neighbor, one will not always avoid giving offence. Though one go to the other extreme, and smear everything one encounters with indiscriminate eulogy, one will occasionally find that his words are as wormwood. The man of tact will therefore learn all he can of those with whom he is to converse; will select those topics most likely to be of agreeable interest; and when after all his pains he stumbles into a blunder, will be quick to discover it, and quick to withdraw from it.

**Developing the Subject.**—Not only the choice of a subject, but the manner of treatment should be determined by consideration for one's companion. If it prove familiar and interesting to him it should be continued even after one has tired of it, or should be so changed as to seem to be dismissed, not because it is exhausted, but because with such a companion there are so many other subjects one longs to discuss. Nothing is ruder than to yawn, to seem abstracted, or abruptly to terminate a conversation still fascinating to one's companion. This not only wounds his self-love by showing him that he fails to talk

interestingly, but discloses a lack of sympathy in thought which is fatal to intimacy.

A tedious person is one a man would leap a steeple from, gallop down any steep hill to avoid him ; forsake his meat, sleep, nature itself with all her benefits, to shun him. A mere impertinent ; one that touched neither heaven nor earth in his discourse. He opened an entry into a fair room, but shut it again presently. I spake to him of garlic, he answered asparagus ; consulted him of marriage, he tells me of hanging, as if they went by one and the same destiny.—BEN JONSON.

**Bores and Hobbies.**—Against the bore, or the man with a hobby, one must of course protect one's self ; though this is done most skilfully by avoiding the former and by steering the latter away from his morbidly developed ideas. But when a person will insist upon tiring one with his pet theory or grievance, it is better to say frankly : “ Mr. —, you really must excuse me from discussing this subject further,” than to look exhausted, or to run away from him. In the former case one will seem to him to fail to appreciate the subject, in the latter to fail to appreciate the man himself.

But the necessity for such pronounced measures is not common in small talk, where the object is rather to develop conversation in one's companion than to limit it or direct it. If he is a stranger, one will not be sorry to see him mount his hobby for the first time, and if he is an acquaintance, one can usually manage that the interview be brief. In this light conversation it is a general rule, at least to seem to follow the lead of one's companion, so far as he is willing to assume it.

**Importance of Listening.**—It is a fundamental principle that he seems to his companion to have talked best who has led his companion to talk most. In other words, he talks best who listens best. Nowhere is selfish-

ness more blind than when it monopolizes a conversation. Only small minds are more anxious to tell what they have learned than to learn something more.

"Men of genius," says Coleridge, "are rarely much annoyed in the company of vulgar people, because they have a power of looking at such people, as objects of amusement, of another race altogether."

"When I hear a young man call Aristotle a fool, and Sophocles a knave," said a college president, "it does not materially affect my opinion of Aristotle and Sophocles, but it gives me a gauge by which to measure the young man."

During the late Vienna Exposition an amiable Hungarian merchant happened to meet in a railway carriage a gentleman with whom he proceeded to hold conversation.

"I am going to Vienna," said the merchant, "to see my daughter, who is well married there. My son-in-law deals in paper and fancy leather work, and has a good trade. He is very prosperous."

"I, too," said the good-natured stranger, "am going to see my daughter and son-in-law."

"Ah, is your son-in-law well off?"

"Pretty well; but as he has to carry on his work all alone, it is rather tiresome."

"Is your daughter rich?"

"Not as rich as she would like to be."

"She likes to spend a good deal on her toilet?"

"No; but she would like to be able to give a good deal in charity."

"She is a good woman," said the merchant, heartily; "it's to be hoped your son-in-law's business will improve. Good-by, sir. Come to see us, and bring your daughter; we shall be happy to make her acquaintance."

The train arrived at the station, and the traveller, whose son-in-law's business was only pretty good, was immediately surrounded by grand personages in uniform. After having politely saluted the amazed merchant, he stepped into the carriage of the Emperor of Austria. The good father-in-law of the dealer in paper and fancy leather goods had been travelling with the Prince Max, of Bavaria, father of the Empress Elizabeth.

**The Wise always Ready to Learn.**—There are three degrees of intelligence. Lowest is that of the rustic, to whom everything is a marvel. Then comes the *blasé* man, who has been everywhere, seen everything, read everything, and would be untrue to himself if he manifested in anything more than languid interest. This is a not uncommon conception of "Boston culture." Finally, there is the broad mind, familiar with the master-pieces of nature, and art, and thought, but finding an ever-renewed interest in studying the effect of either knowledge or ignorance of these master-pieces upon the minds of those about him. Such men are always ready to listen, and one's mental distance from them may be measured by one's tendency to assume that nothing is to be learned from a chance companion, especially if such companion has had less educational or social advantages.

"The young man called John" would seem to most persons an unendurable infliction at the autocrat's breakfast-table, but autocrat and professor take him seriously as a factor in life, deal with him firmly but kindly, and end by heartily liking him.

**Interruptions.**—There are people who never allow another to conclude a sentence. So eager are they to obtrude their knowledge and opinions, and to hear their own voices, that they keep up interruptions so continuous that their companion withdraws altogether, leaving them to evolve out of their imaginations the facts he was willing to impart.

A newspaper sketch thus caricatures an ill-bred family :

The other evening the Rev. Mr. Marcus sat down at the tea-table with a thoughtful air, and attended to the wants of his children in an abstracted manner. Presently he looked up at his wife, and said :

"The Apostle Paul ——"

"Got an awful lump on the head this afternoon," broke in the pastor's eldest son, "playing base-ball. Bat flew out of the striker's hands when I was umpire, and hit me right above the ear."

The clergyman gravely paused for the interruption and then resumed :

"The Apostle Paul ——"

"Saw Mrs. Simmons down at Hovey's this afternoon," said the eldest daughter, addressing her mother. "She had the same black silk made over, with a vest of green silk, coat-tail basque, overskirt made with diagonal folds in front, edged with deep fringe ; yellow straw hat with black velvet facing inside the brim, and pale blue flowers. She's going to Chicago."

The good minister waited patiently, and then in tones just a shade louder than before, began :

"The Apostle Paul ——"

"Went in swimming last night with Henry and Ben, papa, and stepped on a clam-shell," exclaimed the youngest son ; "cut my foot so I can't wear a shoe, and, please, can't I stay at home to-morrow?"

The pastor informed his son that he might stay away from the river, and then resumed his topic. He said :

"The Apostle Paul says ——"

"My teacher is an awful liar," shouted the second son ; "he says the world is as round as an orange, and it turns round all the time faster than a circus-man can ride. I guess he don't have much sense."

The mother lifted a warning finger toward the boy and said, "Sh !" and the father resumed :

"The Apostle Paul says ——"

"Don't bite off so much," broke out the eldest son, reproving the assault of his little brother upon a piece of cake.

The pastor's face showed just a trifle of annoyance as he said, in very firm, decided tones,

"The Apostle Paul says ——"

"There's a fly in the butter," shrieked the youngest hopeful of the family, and a general laugh followed. When silence was restored the eldest daughter said with an air of curiosity :

"Well, but, pa, I really would like to know what the Apostle Paul said."

"Pass me the mustard," said the pastor, absently ; and the meal was finished without further allusion to the great apostle.

**Listening Received as a Compliment.**—No flattery is more insinuating, no proof of good sense more convincing, than intelligent listening. It is said that a deaf and dumb man, properly instructed, was introduced to Mme. de Staël and was left with her for an hour. He made show of listening, smiled, turned his head to reflect, was convinced, became enthusiastic, and started again and again to express his admiration, only to be once more overwhelmed in the delighted woman's torrent of ideas. At the end of the interview she declared him the most brilliant converser she had ever met.

The woman of tact puts the bashful young man at his ease, not by saying brilliant things to him, but by showing interest in the stupid things he says to her till he gains confidence enough to say things better worth hearing. She knows that he will estimate the evening not by what he has heard, but by what he has said, and if she has the skill to reclothe or touch up his thoughts so as to give them striking expression, while they shall still seem to be his, she may indeed evoke less conscious admiration for her conversational talent than if she had showered him with epigrams, because he will be unaware that his unusual brilliancy is due to anything else than his own unsuspected talents ; but she will win, as she deserves to win, his far more valuable admiration of her as a charming woman. When he is older, and has learned the secret that then escaped him, he will look back upon the evening with an admiration for her skill the greater because he at first failed to recognize it, and the more cordial because it was so unobtrusive.

**Desire to be Brilliant.**—Perhaps the greatest obstacle to success in table-talk is the longing to be brilliant.

As Adolphus sips his morning glass at the Hathorn Spring he catches the eye of Mrs. Smith, whom he met at the hop the night before. He says "Good morning," and then he is at a loss. He



knows how long she has been there, how long she means to stay, and how she likes it, for he asked her these three questions as soon as he was introduced. He does not feel like remarking that it is warm, that Saratoga begins to seem crowded, and that the races open that afternoon, because he thinks those she has met must already have exhausted these topics. What he would like to do would be to make some learned allusion to Hippocrone or some other famous spring, with a compliment to the lady ; but he is not quite sure how Hippocrene is pronounced, or whether it was a spring, and he cannot think of any compliment. So after a moment's awkwardness he bows and passes, leaving Mrs. Smith to wonder why young men that can dance so well are so stupid at everything else.

Now, Adolphus should have remembered that conversation is like a game of whist, in which one's own hand gives no indication of what one's partner holds. The player is hopeless who throws down his cards because he has not five trumps and three aces. Weak as it looks, his hand may be just what is needed to supplement the commanding strength of his partner. It is his duty to play his sevens and eights for all they are worth as zealously as if they were head-sequences.

So if Adolphus cannot think of a brilliant thing to say, he should throw out a common-place, and trust to his partner. The main thing is to get started. Perhaps Mrs. Smith is brimming over with bright things, and will enjoy the conversation the more because Adolphus has so little to say that he is glad to listen. At the worst, it is unlikely that a dozen remarks can pass, however trite, without suggesting something of interest. With a stranger one must grope for a subject somewhat blindly, but unless one has the courage to grope, the subject will never come to the surface.

**Frank Good Nature.**—Nothing is more fatal to table-talk than a sort of stilted dignity.

Some men speak as if a leather stock kept their chins elevated like those of a militia-regiment on dress-parade. They reply to a playful question with a gravity befitting a geometrical demonstration, they articulate with painful distinctness, and they continually address you as "Sir," or "Madam," with a formality that

shows less regard for your dignity than determination that you shall not forget theirs. Unless this ice can be thawed, talk is impossible. To such a person no communication should be made of less import than that England has declared war, that a new motor has been discovered, or that dinner is ready.

**Exaggeration of Preferences.**—Table-talk is to conversation what caricature is to painting. In so brief a discussion of topics distinctive features must be exaggerated.

Questions of taste are perhaps most fertile, and to make divergencies marked enough for comment, it is customary somewhat to exaggerate their expression. It is not that one should "dote on" or "detest" what one finds merely unobjectionable or disagreeable, but rather that one is led for the sake of discussion to take sides upon matters which he has hitherto regarded as indifferent. Listening to masters of table-talk who are really rather conventional in their views one might suppose them pronounced radicals upon the merest trifles. This is not deception, any more than it is deception in a caricature to exaggerate the nose or chin that gives a statesman's face individual expression; in fact, as one recognizes a face more readily from a caricature than from a portrait, so this table-talk often reveals unwittingly more of the inner man than is shown in serious conversation. A chance confession, hastily dropped to complete an antithesis, may uncover to a keen eye what in deliberate discourse would have remained concealed.

Moreover, this exaggerating the outlines of one's personal preferences often leads to convictions. Sometimes, no doubt, harm is done by espousing a belief through whimsicality and then adhering to it through obstinacy. But in the sparkle of table-talk the candid mind often happens upon important considerations that have hitherto escaped it, and, following a line of thought suggested by a playful fancy, arrives at convictions of positive value.

**Playful Liberties.**—As one may speak with frolicsome exaggeration of one's preferences, so one may take playful liberties with the dignity of one's companions.

Light conversation is dull without something of the "contagion of hardihood" that Disraeli describes.

But nothing is more difficult to hedge about with rules. Josephine is a strong, vigorous girl, with more muscles than nerves, and more appetite than sensibility. The severer a joke the more keenly she enjoys it, and not the less if it is aimed at herself. She cannot understand why Carolin should be hurt at a hearty laugh over a blunder committed or a weakness manifested; and so without an unkind thought she is continually rasping Carolin's finer feelings, and wondering why the silly creature cannot take a joke.

**Never Twit on Facts.**—One should never rally another on a real weakness, however freely acknowledged. Constitutionally large eaters should be able to endure almost any kind of a joke, and especially a gleeful reference to their appetites; yet it often happens that a person so rallied, though too proud to show it, and therefore quick to join in the laugh that follows, is really annoyed, and loses much of his pleasure at meals because of his sensitiveness to the imputation of greediness. Every one has his pet foible which may not be rudely jostled; and one should know a companion well before one ventures to poke at him any fun which has a basis in fact.

A certain confidence is shown by bantering a person upon an assumed fault which the fact that we banter him upon it shows we are sure he is free from. A more unfortunate blunder, except that it was so stupid as to be ridiculous, could hardly be imagined than that of the clerk in a New Haven shoe-store who, when a lady who had dragged for half a block before she perceived them a pair of light shoes accidentally attached to her crinoline, returned to the store to remove them and to laugh over the queer accident, replied gravely, "I saw you take them away, madam, but I did not like to speak of it."

**Banter.**—There is in personal banter an element of sauciness as hazardous as it is delightful. Just what it is safe to say, and just when and where to say it, only native tact and quick perception can determine. It is here more than anywhere else that the artist shows above the artisan. No rules will avail, except the general rule, that the person who has usually blundered should hereafter leave badinage to more skilful hands.

**Irreverence and Indelicacy.**—A similar rule applies to anything bordering upon the irreverent and the indelicate. In such allusions there is an element of daring which gives a sensation of keen enjoyment to those who feel secure, but corresponding uneasiness to those uncertain of the issue. The difficulty is complicated among strangers, because ideals of the reverent and delicate vary so widely, that being commonplace to one which to another is shocking. But no caution is better worth heeding than to keep well within the danger-line.

A man advertised for a coachman, and received three applicants. Of each he asked :

“Suppose we were riding on top of a bluff, how near could you drive to the edge of the precipice, and there should be no danger?”

“Sir,” replied the first, “I could drive within an inch of the edge, and there should be no danger.”

“And I,” said the second, “could drive within a hair’s breadth, and there should be no danger.”

“As for me,” said the third, “I should keep as far away from the edge as I could;” and the third was engaged.

**Prudery.**—It by no means follows that one should be prudish. To speak of one’s leg as a limb, or to shrink from mentioning articles of apparel when there is occasion, reveals either a lewd mind or a habit of mingling with those adhering to traditions of impropriety suggested by lewd minds.

**Ignoring Discourtesy.**—The skilful converser ignores discourtesy in speech. If his companion is rude he does not revenge himself by severe retort, however apt, as he would thereby lower himself to the other's level, and encourage a wrangle. If his companion inclines to irreverence or indelicacy he turns the subject into other channels, careful not to show approval, but equally careful not to pronounce judgment of reproach for what may have been a fault of early training or the accident of the moment. His companion will recognize that he has blundered, but he will not be compelled to show that he recognizes it, and thus a conversation that would otherwise have been cut unpleasantly short may be diverted into less objectionable channels.

Perhaps no general rule is so nearly without exception, as that one should never permit one's self to repeat a vulgar story. Even that peculiar appropriateness of circumstances which, except for its coarseness, would make it precisely the fitting thing—a rare temptation to story-tellers—will not atone for its introduction. When a man clears his throat and hesitates and says he does not usually indulge in that sort of anecdote, some good friend should jog his elbow and warn him to pause. We have heard worthy men yield to this temptation, but never without being apprehensive for them when they began, and sorry for them when they finished. Wit, hilarity, promotion of the good fellowship prevailing, all prompt the man who knows a story just apropos to tell it. But not for all these considerations should he yield that essential element of a gentleman—a cleanly tongue.

While one should never tell such stories, there are times when he must listen to them. With those of one's own age and position it is often possible simply and quietly to decline to listen; but with those whom it would be unbecoming thus to reprove one must simply show lack of interest. A lady of tact used to discourage scandal by looking stupid when it was talked to her. Such refuse is not poured profusely into an unwilling ear. Harpies fly in flocks.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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- VALUE OF READINESS** in conversation, pp. 1, 14.  
**EASY CONVERSATION AN ART**, pp. 14-16.  
Often even direct preparation required, pp. 15, 16.  
Conversational artists succeed because they try, p. 16.  
**FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE**, not to shine, but to please, pp. 16-18.  
Attention to others the tutor of the tongue, p. 17.  
**CHOICE OF SUBJECT** with reference to one's companion, p. 18.  
Rude questions rebuked, p. 18.  
Discretion in personal remarks, pp. 18-20.  
False steps lead to floundering, p. 19.  
Escape by rare tact, pp. 19, 20.  
Usually wise to betray no recognition, p. 20.  
**DEVELOPMENT OF SUBJECT** determined by consideration for others, p. 20.  
Not to be abruptly discontinued, p. 20.  
Protection against bores and hobbies, p. 21.  
**IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING**, pp. 21-25.  
Blindness of monopolizing a conversation, p. 23.  
The wise always ready to learn, p. 23.  
Rudeness of interruptions, pp. 23-25.  
Listening received as a compliment, p. 25.  
**DESIRE TO BE BRILLIANT**, pp. 25, 26.  
Whatever cards you hold, give your partner a chance, p. 26.  
**FRANK GOOD NATURE**, p. 26.  
**EXAGGERATION OF PREFERENCES**, p. 27.  
**PLAYFUL LIBERTIES**, pp. 27-29.  
The contagion of hardihood, p. 28.  
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Banter, p. 28.  
Irreverence and indelicacy, p. 29.  
Safest to keep away from the edge, p. 29.  
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**IGNORING DISCOURTESY**, p. 30.  
How to treat vulgar stories, p. 30.

### SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What should the astronomer have said? (page 14). What do you think of the speakers in the incidents mentioned on page 18? How should Adolphus (page 25) have begun the conversation?

What do you think of this remark of Emerson's? "'Tis not a compliment but a disparagement to consult a man only on horses, or on steam, or on theatres, or on eating, or on books, and, whenever he appears, considerately to turn the conversation to the bantling he is known to fondle.

## CHAPTER III.

### GOSSIP.

*The proper study of mankind is man.—POPE.*

**Interest In Our Neighbors.**—No subject is more fertile than the doings and characters of our neighbors. Few objects of observation are so varying, so personally interesting. Daily circumstances keep revealing new features, and dim or deepen impressions already formed. A pleasant nod, a rude reply, a becoming gown, a boisterous laugh, ill-temper toward a child, attention to the aged—trifles like these are constantly noted and accumulated to make up our final estimate of the individual. It is not that we pry into secrets. No one is more to be pitied than one so empty of mind that one's curiosity must be fed by impertinent watchfulness and inquiry about one's neighbors; but without disposition of this kind we cannot fail to keep learning of those about us from what they tell us of themselves, and from what thrusts itself upon our observation.

That we should consider these indications, compare them, and gradually form convictions as to our neighbors' characters is inevitable. If we do so charitably, unbiassed by envy or prejudice or whim, we are wiser and happier for it. That we should compare and discuss these impressions of a new neighbor with tried and trusted friends—still charitably, without envy, seeking simply to know our neighbor as he is—is natural and desirable. A rule that

forbade us to discuss those about us, or to discriminate in discussing them, would be severe and unwise.

**The Scandal-Monger.**—But on no subject does it more become us to

—Beware

Of whom you speak, to whom you speak, and how, and when, and where.

For no character is more detestable than his who delights to speak evil of his neighbors in any of the degrees of gossip, babbler, scandal-monger. There are people who covet no higher triumph than to be the first to tell of somebody's misfortune or crime. Like flies that fasten only upon putrid meat, they remember nothing of the virtues of their neighbors, but let slip no single item from the catalogue of their vices. To judge from their reports of their companions, one would think they had never associated with a human being worthy of respect.

It is within the power of every young man to make and keep a resolution never to utter a word directly or indirectly uncomplimentary to any one. If such young persons should be offered a fortune dependent upon success in this, how earnestly would they guard every utterance. And yet no fortune would be of such real benefit to any youth as a heart pure and free from all carping and censure.—HERVEY.

Owing to a strange delusion, very few are really aware of their own habit of indulgence in this vice, though they readily remark it in others. Indeed, the worst offenders would be amazed should they learn the truth. If one has any doubt about it let him set down thrice a day in a blank-book, as nearly as one can recall it, every word which one has said of anybody which one would not repeat to his face or have said of one's self. If one occasionally reviews the volume one will, in all probability, be induced to reform the habit.—*Art of Conversation.*

**Truth Often a Libel.**—Detractors often excuse themselves by asserting that they disseminate only facts.



Even if this were true it would not excuse them. It is a maxim of English law that the greater the truth the greater is the libel.

To tell what is strictly true to the injury of another is frequently as criminal as to tell what is false to his injury. It may be the same both as to the motive that actuated it and the results which eventually follow. It is oftener worse than better in every respect. If one circulates what is wholly false the chances are that the slander will soon be detected and the person vilified emerge from the cloud with brighter honors than ever; whereas if we tell of a real misdeed of another he may never have the boldness to deny it, so that it will go on circulating and gaining belief all his days, and perhaps long after he is dead. It will exert a secret yet blighting influence on his reputation and move on before him like some unseen hand, closing in his face every door to usefulness. No matter that he has repented of his transgression, and has radically reformed; no matter that he is now entitled to the highest admiration of mankind, some detractor has whispered a word that can never be recalled—a word which, most likely, represented him to be what he is not now, if not worse than he ever was. Yet everybody boldly and industriously circulates the report because, as he says, it is true.—HERVEY.

**Exposure Sometimes Necessary.**—Exposure of wrong-doing is sometimes an imperative duty. The good of the State, of the community, at least of individuals, may be imperilled by a mask of hypocrisy which only we can or have courage to remove. But we should be sure that our motive for interfering is really the welfare of others, and not the gratification of our own envy or fondness for gossip. We have no occasion to interfere with the good name of another unless we are convinced that he is making use of it to accomplish some evil purpose.

A point of special difficulty arises when a person whose guilty secrets we know, and we alone, is injuring us before the public by repeating tales to our injury which an un-

covering by us of his real character would deprive of harmfulness. Under these circumstances it is sometimes necessary to speak, and to speak severely. But as a general rule, time and character are the surest vindicators. The very fact that we are aggrieved prejudices the public against our story, and often makes it wiser for us to suffer in silence.

The greatest and most numerous wrongs are those which the strong commit against the weak in circumstances where none but the parties are witnesses to the offence, and in cases in which, from the imperfections of human law, redress is not to be obtained. The wise suppress such grief in their own hearts, considering that society takes no pleasure in hearing individual grievances. Though it is extremely difficult to hush injured justice, as she laments bitterly within us, we can seldom speak in our own defence except at the cost of dignity, or probity, or candor. The aggressor who does not trouble others with arguments in his own defence is better received in society than the aggrieved who oppresses them with the story of his wrongs, by repeating which he is sure to suffer additional wrong from their reviews of the case; he becomes like a column which, having once begun to settle upon its treacherous pedestal, is pressed still lower by bringing down upon its capital a mass it did not before support. We had better bear in silence the wrongs we suffer than by our groanings wake up a crowd of surmisers who will, in all likelihood, take sides against us.

When, however, it becomes our duty, as it sometimes does, to declare what is discreditable to another, we must strictly limit ourselves to the fact, carefully keeping clear of all comments, inferences, and opinions. The witness may not assume the task of the advocate or of the judge.—HERVEY.

**Libel Seldom Truth.**—But libel is seldom truth. "The originator only suspects Mr. Such-a-one has done the deed, or hopes he did it not; the second person believes it, or thinks it would be in keeping with his known

character to do it ; a third has no doubt about it ; a fourth offers to make oath that he is worse than at first suspected. Thus does it go on increasing both in enormity and credibility. 'Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth :'

Two honest tradesmen meeting in the Strand,  
 One took the other briskly by the hand ;  
 "Hark ye," said he, "'tis an odd story this,  
 About the crows !"—"I don't know what it is,"  
 Replied his friend.—"No ! I'm surprised at that ;  
 Where I come from it is the common chat ;  
 But you shall hear : an odd affair indeed !  
 And that it happened they are all agreed.  
 Not to detain you from a thing so strange,  
 A gentleman, that lives not far from 'Change,  
 This week, in short, as all the alley knows,  
 Taking a puke, has thrown up three black crows."  
 "Impossible !"—"Nay, but it's really true,  
 I had it from good hands, and so may you."  
 "From whose, I pray ?" So having named the man,  
 Straight to inquire his curious comrade ran.  
 "Sir, did you tell"—relating the affair—  
 "Yes, sir, I did ; and if it's worth your care,  
 Ask Mr. Such-a-one, he told it me.  
 But, by the by, 'twas two black crows, not three."  
 Resolved to trace so wondrous an event,  
 Whip to the third the virtuoso went.  
 "Sir"—and so forth—"Why, yes ; the thing's a fact,  
 Though, in regard to number not exact ;  
 It was not two black crows, 'twas only one ;  
 The truth of that you may depend upon,  
 The gentleman himself told me the case."  
 "Where may I find him ?"—"Why, in such a place."  
 Away he goes, and, having found him out—  
 "Sir, be so good as to resolve a doubt,"  
 Then, to his last informant, he referred,  
 And begged to know if true what he had heard.  
 "Did you, sir, throw up a black crow ?" "Not I !"  
 "Bless me ! how people propagate a lie !  
 Black crows have been thrown up, three, two, and one,  
 And here I find at last all comes to none !  
 Did you say nothing of a crow at all ?"  
 "Crow—crow—perhaps I might, now I recall  
 The matter over." "And pray, sir, what was't ?"  
 "Why, I was horrid sick, and, at the last,  
 I did throw up, and told my neighbor so,  
 Something that was as black, sir, as a crow."

**Calumny May Start from Raillery.**—“Calumny many times originates in raillery and extravaganza. Loose-tongued people say the worst things of the best men for the sake of raising a laugh at the incongruity; else they invent strange stories concerning some distinguished person, and tell them to the unsuspecting in order to amuse themselves with their credulity. These experiments often turn out more serious results than were at first anticipated. These sayings are believed and spread till they are generally received as true, or till the gay babblers who started them are convicted of libel. ‘As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbor, and saith, ‘Am not I in sport?’”

Another type of woman frequently encountered in society is the plausible, specious, but selfishly insincere one, designated by those who know her best as a thorough humbug. Although not intending to be directly untruthful, she is very far from being accurate, and it is even doubtful if she endeavors to bend her steps in that direction. Strangers consider her delightful until they have known her long enough to discover that she is dangerous, and that the pleasant things she says to them she has an unpleasant habit of unsaying of them.

Thus, wishing to ingratiate herself, she would say :

“How very handsome your daughter looks to-night; how beautifully she is dressed;” and more in the same strain; while of the same young lady she would remark, “I cannot say that I admire Miss D., and how over-dressed she is; with her mother’s small income, it is absurd the money spent on that girl’s dress; she actually wore velvet the other night much too heavy for her,” and so on; or she would perhaps say to some other member of the family :

“I hear you are not going to stay with your brother and his wife in Scotland this autumn; I thought you went every year:” to which her friend, not having been invited, would reply briefly, “We usually do stay with them in September, but they have not asked us this year.”

“I should think you found it rather dull there,” would be the sympathetic rejoinder. “Anyone so bright and clever as you are must feel the want of congenial companionship; some people, I know, consider your sister-in-law rather heavy to get along with.”

“She is very quiet and reserved, especially with people whom she does not know very well,” might be the reply.

“So I have heard; but then your brother is so very genial and agreeable that if she

is not a very good hostess it is not of much consequence, although I should have thought your being with them would have been of the greatest advantage to her. My husband thinks you make such a perfect hostess that I confess I feel quite jealous sometimes."

Whether the husband has or has not expressed himself to this extent is of little moment to his imaginative partner, who merely makes use of him as an auxiliary to strengthen her position. The humbugging process usually has some end in view, and a lengthened visit at the house of the perfect hostess is, perhaps, on this occasion, the one aimed at; and as incense rarely fails of producing a certain pleasing effect upon a woman when offered by a man, even though offered indirectly, the lady receiving it would be very likely to say with a pleased little laugh:

"It is very good of him to say so, but I am afraid he has not had much opportunity of forming a favorable judgment of my powers in that capacity; but perhaps when we are settled at home again I may be able to persuade you both to pay us a little visit."

"I am sure we shall not require any persuasion to do a thing that would give us so much pleasure," the lady would retort: "it is too kind of you to think of us. My husband was only saying the other day how much he should like to see the improvements you have made at your place; we say *you*, because, as he says, you have such admirable taste."

After a pleasant visit has been paid, and all possible hospitality and kindness have been received at the hands of her friend, this type of her class, true to her nature, cannot resist when the occasion presents itself playing the same game for perhaps a similar purpose with the before-mentioned sister-in-law of her friend, and enacting some such part, and carrying on some such dialogue as the following:

"What a pity it is your sister-in-law does not care to stay with you at your beautiful place in Scotland. I can't understand how she can possibly find it dull there."

"Did she tell you she found it dull with us?" would be the abrupt query. "She always appeared to be very pleased to come to us."

"I understood her to say that nothing could be so dull as it was. She gave me the impression that she thought you did not pay her sufficient attention when she was up in Scotland with you; in fact, that you did nothing to amuse her, but I dare say she did not mean it. She is a little jealous probably of your influence over her brother; she cannot help seeing how he naturally defers to you in everything."

"I cannot forgive her calling it dull with us," remarks the aggrieved sister-in-law; "she has been so much with us since her marriage; but I certainly shall not ask her so often in future, if that is her opinion."

"Oh, I should not take any notice of this sort of thing if I were you. People of her volatile temperament say a great deal more than they mean; in fact, many things which it is so much wiser not to remember;" and by this ambiguous way of speaking she conveys the idea that far more remains to be told, but which is discreetly withheld.

The lever on which this distorting principle is worked by these ladies is not the downright intention of maligning and misrepresenting a friend or acquaintance, but is the selfish desire of talking themselves into favor at another's expense; and displacing that other, and usurping the vacant place by simulating an interest and strong liking, is the easiest way of accomplishing this object. Thus they continue to humbug their friends and acquaintances, and establish many feuds in many families, and create no little mischief one way and another, but are tolerated in a certain degree by some people who think it rather pleasant than not to be humbugged when thoroughly on their guard against the administrator of the dose; and by others, because, rather afraid of what may be said of themselves, they think it wisest to stand well with the humbug; while others, again, have yet to learn of what these wily ones are capable and the worth of their agreeable speeches.—*Society Small Talk.*

**Acerbity of Tongue a Temptation.**—Ill-natured remarks are the sorest temptation young conversers encounter. Human nature is so weak, so common is the disposition to feel better content with ourselves if others are brought down to our level, that the satirist and the scandal-monger are usually listened to. This attention they receive as complacently as though it were a compliment paid to their wit. But the real fact is that the listeners, though they are mean enough to like to have the bitter things said, are too timid to say them; so, by their attention, they reward the back-biter as the monkey might reward the cat which burned its paws in pulling from the fire the chestnuts the monkey wanted but was afraid to reach for.

“When I was young,” said Rogers, “I found that no one would listen to my civil speeches because I had a very small voice; so I began to say ill-natured things, and then people began to attend me.”

“Is that the contents you are looking at?” asked an anxious author, who saw Rogers’s eye fixed on the early pages of a work just presented to him. “No,” replied the poet, pointing to the list of subscribers, “at the *discontents*.”

People used to manœuvre to be the last to leave the room where he was, assured that unkind things would be said after each departure by those who remained. Success like this may better be dispensed with. People may listen, but they dread and despise; they may cringe, but they long for reprisal. We can almost forgive the cruel retort of Richard Sharp, who, when Rogers in his old age, hovering upon the brink of the grave, repeated the couplet:

“The Robin with its furtive glance  
Comee and looks at me askance,”

struck in, “If it had been a carrion-crow it would have looked you full in the face.”

It was the opinion of Luther that Satan himself cannot bear contempt; it is certain that man cannot. No creature is more dreaded in society than a sneering, satirizing, disdainful one. If we cannot avoid feeling an inward contempt for another, we can at any rate avoid showing him any mark of it. The betrayal of such a feeling will offend without reforming him. We should never heed what we cannot help.—HERVEY.

I remember that in my childhood I was very religious. I rose in the night, was abstinent, and was punctual in the performance of my devotions. One night I was sitting in the presence of my father with the holy Koran in my embrace, not having closed my eyes during the whole time, though numbers around me were asleep. I said to my father, "Not one of these lifteth up his head to perform his genuflexions; but they are all so fast asleep you would say they are dead." He replied, "Life of your father, it were better that you also were asleep than to be searching out the faults of your neighbors."—SAADL.

**Family Bickerings.**—Especially deplorable is the habit of speaking ill of one's family or intimate friends. The world is severe in its judgment of those who expose the faults of kindred, no matter what the provocation may be. Rudeness can go no further than to indulge in family bickering in the presence of strangers.

*Familiarity in Public.*—Another criticism which I cannot help making is on the practice of using in general society unmeaning and ridiculous familiar nicknames or terms of endearment. A more offensive habit cannot be imagined, or one which more effectually tends to the disparagement of those who indulge in it.

I find myself, after the departure of the ladies from the dining-room, sitting next to an agreeable and sensible man. I get into interesting conversation with him. We seek a corner in the drawing-room afterwards and continue it. His age and experience make him a treasure-house of information and practical wisdom. Yet, as talk trieth the man, infirmities begin to appear here and there, and my respect for my friend suffers diminution. By-and-by a decided weak point is detected; and further on, it becomes evident

that in the building up of his mental and personal fabric there is somewhere a loose stratum which will not hold under pressure.

At last the servants begin to make those visits to the room, usually occurring about ten o'clock, which begin with gazing about, and result in a rush at some recognized object, with a summons from the coachman below. I am just doubting whether I have not come to the end of my companion, when a shrill voice from the other side of the room calls out, "Sammy, love!"

All is out. He has a wife who does not know better, and he has never taught her better. This is the secret. The skeleton in their cupboard is a child's rattle. A man may as well suck his thumb all his life as talk, or allow to be talked to him, such drivelling nonsense. It must detract from manliness of character, and from proper self-respect, and is totally inconsistent with the good taste, and consideration, even in the least things, for the feelings of others, which are always present in persons of good-breeding and Christian courtesy.

Never let the world look through these chinks into the boudoir. Even thence, if there be real good sense present, all that is childish and ridiculous will be banished; but at all events, keep it from the world. It is easy for husband and wife, it is easy for brothers and sisters, to talk to one another as none else could talk, without a word of this minced-up English. One soft tone from lips on which dwells wisdom is worth all the "loveys" and "deareys" which become the unmeaning expletives of the vulgar.  
—DEAN ALFORD.

**Familiarity with Others.**—The clerk of a hotel sued his employers for breach of contract, they having discharged him before the period covered by the contract had expired. The evidence on the part of the defence showed that the clerk had indulged in familiarity toward guests who did nothing to invite it, and had thereby injured the business of his employers. It was admitted that the clerk was in the habit of addressing guests and others either by their Christian names or by their surnames only. The Massachusetts Supreme Court said:



To address a person by his Christian name, unless the parties have been intimately connected, socially and otherwise, is uncalled-for familiarity, and, therefore, insulting to the person so addressed. To address a party by his surname only, shows a want of respect, and would imply that the party so addressed was beneath the party addressing; therefore it is discourteous, and would be considered insulting. To speak of employers by their surnames only, shows a great want of respect on the part of the employe toward the employer.

The Court further held :

While it may be customary for a person to address his junior clerks or under-servants by their Christian or surnames, to address others so shows a want of respect, and the party so addressed would naturally evade contact in the future with any one who had previously so addressed him.

Politeness, added the Court, costs nothing; but the want of it cost the plaintiff the loss of his situation. The complaint was dismissed with costs.

**Influence of Language on Character.**—Language exerts a reflex influence upon character. In discarding abusive expressions, one learns to cure the habit of thinking evil of others, and of gloating over their faults—for the “hypocrites” who play such a part in the old-fashioned dramas—the men who use language to conceal their thoughts—are less common than one might suppose, even in purpose, and rare indeed in accomplishment.

All detractors do not begin with hating the person they lessen in the estimation of others. They wish, it may be, to warn their friends from leading the same life by pointing out its dangers, or to clear themselves of a charge by showing where the blame ought to lie; but what begins with gold often ends with clay. It is an inclination of the human heart to hate those whom it has injured. . . . Solomon says, “A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it.” Even when any one reports what is true, if he

knows he has done it imprudently as to manner, or uncharitably as to motive, or, at any rate, to the unnecessary injury of another, he can hardly help regarding the injured person with unhappy feelings. Self-accusation follows every recollection of the person concerning whom he has so spoken, and he no longer finds pleasure in the company of one the very sight of whom brings to mind the wrong he has done him.—HERVEY.

Dean Swift says: "They have never forgiven us the injury they did us."

**Acerbity Becomes Morbid.**—The ability to say severe and cutting things, if cultivated into habit, becomes a disease, often leading even great men to strive rather that their remarks be caustic than that they be true.

It must have been from what Mr. De Quincey happily calls the overmastering spirit of stating everything "in a spirit of amplification, with a view to the wonder only of the reader," that he was induced to speak as he has spoken of numerous literary celebrities. "Hazlitt had read nothing;" "Rousseau, like William Wordsworth, had read at the outside twelve volumes octavo in his whole lifetime;" and Porson's "knowledge of English was so limited that his entire cargo might have been embarked on board a walnut-shell on the bosom of a slop-basin, and insured for three half-pence." Edmund Burke "was the most double-minded person in the world," and Lindley Murray, the American, is called "an imbecile stranger." Dr. Johnson "had studied nothing," and Boileau and Addison were "neither of them accomplished in scholarship."—FITZEDWARD HALL.

Mark the coarseness into which Sydney Smith could degenerate: "He is of the utilitarian school. That man is so hard you might drive a broad-wheeled wagon over him and it would make no impression; if you were to bore holes in him with a gimlet I am convinced saw-dust would come out of him. That school treat mankind as if they were mere machines; the feelings or affections never enter into their calculations. If everything is to be sacrificed to utility, why do you bury your grandmother at all? Why don't you cut her into small pieces at once, and make portable soup of her?"

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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**INTEREST IN OUR NEIGHBORS, p. 32.**

**THE SCANDAL-MONGER, p. 33.**

Truth often a libel, p. 33.

Exposure sometimes necessary, p. 34.

Libel seldom truth, p. 35.

Exaggeration, p. 35.

The three black crows, p. 36.

Calumny from raillery, p. 37.

Mean self-ingratiation, p. 37.

**ACERBITY OF TONGUE A TEMPTATION, p. 39.**

**FAMILY BICKERINGS, p. 40.**

Endearing terms in public, p. 40.

**OFFENSIVE FAMILIARITY, p. 41.**

**INFLUENCE OF LANGUAGE ON CHARACTER, p. 42.**

Sharp tongues make hard hearts, p. 43.

### SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Read pages 216-221. What differences occur to you between talking and printing gossip? between listening to it and reading it?

"It takes," says Thoreau, "two to speak truth--one to speak and another to hear." Do you agree with him, and why?

What do you think of the following extract from *The Century*?

"Of all the sources of bad manners, we know of none so prolific and pernicious as the license of familiarity. There is no one among our readers, we presume, who has not known a village or a neighborhood in which all the people called one another by their first or Christian names. The 'Jim,' or 'Charley,' or 'Mollie,' or 'Fannie,' of the young days of school-life, remain the same until they totter into the grave from old age. Now, there may be a certain amount of good-fellowship and homely friendliness in this kind of familiar address, but there is not a particle of politeness in it. It is all very well, within a family or a circle of relatives, but when it is carried outside, it is intolerable. Every gentleman has a right to the title, at least of 'Mister,' and every lady to that of 'Miss' or 'Mistress,' even when the Christian name is used. We have known remarkable men, living for years under the blight of their familiarly-used first names,—men whose fortunes would have been made, or greatly mended, by removing to some place where they could have been addressed with the courtesy due to their worth, and been rid forever of the cheapening process of familiarity. How can a man lift his head under the degradation of being called 'Sam' by every man, young and old, whom he may meet in the street? How can a strong character be carried when the man who bears it must bow decently to the name of 'Billy.'"

## CHAPTER IV.

### COMMENDATION AND REPROOF.

If I had another life to live, and two thousand letters to write again, with God's help I would not hurt the feelings of the humblest of all God's creatures honestly trying to do good. He might be as big as Daniel Lambert, and I would not call him fat and unctuous; he might be as lean as Calvin Edson, and I would not call him a bag of bones. I would count each day lost on which I had not made some hearts gladder than they were in the morning, on which I had not plucked up some thorns or planted some flowers on the path of human life.—DR. PRIME.

**Importance of Appreciation.**—Literature is so full of warnings against the flatterer that one might suppose it the serious difficulty of life to keep free from vanity amid the showers of compliments sure to be encountered. But it may be doubted whether the greater danger is not the opposite—discouragement through failure to receive evidence of just appreciation. Formal, meaningless, or fulsome compliments will always be paid in number proportioned to one's ability to be of use to those who pay them. But discriminating approval from an authoritative source, "praise from Sir Hubert Stanley," is bestowed less often than it is needed.

Among the minor duties of life I hardly know any more important than that of not praising where praise is not due. Reputation is one of the prizes for which men contend; it is, as Mr. Burke calls it, "the cheap defence and ornament of nations and the nurse of many exertions;" it produces more labor and more talent than twice the wealth of a country could ever rear up. It is the coin of genius, and it is the imperious duty of every man to bestow it with the most scrupulous justice and the wisest economy.—SYDNEY SMITH.

Nothing can be truer than this, yet is it not equally true that among the minor duties of life is that of praising where praising *is* due? Is it not as important that we should admire what is admirable as that we should despise what is worthless?

The world is full of men, women, and children who are living unhappily and rusting in comparative inactivity, or doing but a tithe of the good they might do, for want of a little judicious praise. . . . To shy, sensitive natures, especially, praise is a vital necessity. They need to be encouraged and caressed as truly as others need to be lashed and spurred; and sincere commendation is to them at once a tonic and a cordial, cheering them with a flush of pleasant feeling and bracing them for further good work. . . . We are confident that a large part of that conduct which so annoys us in our fellow-sinners, and which we resist in society and laugh out of it, as vanity and egotism, is the very opposite, being only an uneasy or frantic attempt to win from others an assurance of what one himself sorely doubts. . . .

Praise and overpraise are two different things; and while the latter, when it does not disgust, puffs up and corrupts its subjects, the former, when justly bestowed, incites to new and earnest effort. It is not honest commendation that inflates, but that which we bestow insincerely when we are angling for compliments and expect to be repaid with compound interest.—MATHEWS.

**Praise Should be Judicious.**—It has been shrewdly observed that we like best to be praised for that in us which is commonly unacknowledged. To compliment a beautiful woman upon her features, an author upon his books, a statesman upon his wisdom, may afford some gratification if done with tact and with sincerity; but to detect and commend an excellence one has only dared to hope one possessed is to bestow a real delight.

Beautiful women are readily convinced by a glance or by demeanor that their charms are appreciated. All of them, however, who have any claims to culture will, when the first tribute is paid, be best pleased with appreciative compliments paid to their intelligence, accomplishments, "spirit," kindness of heart, tastes, hab-

its, hopes, and associations. A very beautiful woman who believes that she has excited a deep admiration for some quality other than her beauty—especially if it be one for which the world gives her little credit—is always gratified.—*Art of Conversation*.

It should be remembered that no woman ever fully foregoes her claims to personal attractiveness.

“How charming Miss Pulchra is looking to-night,” remarks Mr. Juvenis to his hostess.

“Yes,” replies the lady with a sigh, “and none can admire her more than those who like myself have no pretensions to beauty.”

“Ah!” replies Mr. Juvenis, sympathizingly, “but one so mentally gifted as yourself can well afford to dispense with charms of person.”

And then he wonders why he gets no more invitations to that house.

After all said on the subject, it is certain that to an intelligent and cultivated mind there are few women of intelligence entirely devoid of personal attractions; and almost every human being, though he or she may have even relinquished all claim to be beautiful, still clings to the very last to a faith in a certain “expression,” which, if properly appreciated, must raise the whole personality to admiration. And instances are not unfrequent in which women who were either beautiful, piquant, pleasing, or “sympathetic,” have heard so little of the language of admiration that the first report of a really genial compliment paid them thrilled through the heart like fire. This is sometimes the case when a sister has attracted all the admiration.

There are again instances in which a lady may have a good enough opinion of herself and yet be quite incapable of appreciating the peculiar or real reason why she is admired. I could cite the instance of a lover of art who had a special admiration for the singular face of a statue in the Louvre, and who had the strange fortune to find it almost identically realized in the features of a young girl who was by no means accustomed to praise of her beauty. Very often peculiar associations like this will render certain countenances charming to us, which is the secret, by the way, why ignorant boys and girls, who are without such associations, are extremely critical and conventional in the judgment of per-

sonal attractions, while men of wide experience and knowledge are far more generally appreciative and more easily pleased. In short, where we wish to compliment, the opportunity to do so with sincerity and credit to ourselves is seldom wanting where our tastes are cultivated.—*Art of Conversation.*

It is said that William Cullen Bryant was very loath to condemn the first book of a young author. Entering the editorial room one day he found a critic gloating over the flatness of a volume of poems.

“Surely there must be some good point about the book,” pleaded Mr. Bryant.

“Not one,” protested the critic; “the book is utterly stale, flat, and unprofitable.”

“At any rate,” said Mr. Bryant, handling the volume, “you might say that the binding is neat, and that the edges are evenly cut.”

**Praise Should be Definite.**—To a commencement speaker, as he passed down the aisle, one friend said: “That was capital, capital; you have made us all proud of you.” At the close of the exercises another said meditatively: “Tom, your oration was one of the three best, and I think one of the two best.”

Which comment is Tom likely to remember the longer? To speak in terms of general commendation often implies no more than good will. To specify and limit shows attention and discrimination.

Those who intend really to praise another should not speak of him in the language of hyperbole. They run the hazard of inflaming the envy or the jealousy of their hearers, who are tempted to run him down as far below the merited mark as he was raised above it. It is more judicious to set some bounds to our admiration and mention some fault which may be justly imputed to him, so we shall set off his virtues to better advantage, by way of shading or of contrast, and hold out to others no temptation to attack his imperfections.—HERVEY.

Few compliments bear more stamp of the genuine than the Latin verses that Addison has thus translated :

TO A CAPRICIOUS FRIEND.

In all thy humors, whether grave or mellow,  
Thou'rt such a touchy, teaty, pleasant fellow,  
Hast so much mirth and wit and spleen about thee,  
There is no living with thee nor without thee.

**Praise Should Come from Those Qualified to Bestow It.**—“We cannot properly praise a work in art, science, or literature, unless we possess a tolerable knowledge of the subject. A person who is not competent to judge of a work is permitted to say that a treatise, or sermon, or painting, or statue, pleases him, or tell how it strikes his mind ; but for him to declare, in a decisive tone, his opinion of such a work is to incur the contempt or the derision of adepts. Men of sense are not proud of laudations that do not come from equals or superiors.”

Do not go off into raptures at the first sight of a work of nature or of art unless you mean to show your enthusiasm rather than your taste. You had better keep silence till you have formed some opinion. While Sir Joshua Reynolds was at Rome studying the works of Raphael in the Vatican he observed that most strangers who came to see them began to praise them the moment their eyes fell upon them, whereas he was rather disappointed in them at first, and did not begin to appreciate them till he had made them the objects of protracted study. Minds of sensitive and poetic mould are at first sight awed when they contemplate natural scenery of great beauty, grandeur, or sublimity ; while persons of less taste are talkative, and are apt to give the objects before them anything but their right names.—HERVEY.

A young lady who was asked if she had seen Niagara replied that she never had ; but lest this should seem a reflection upon the cataract she hastened to add that she had heard it highly spoken of.



**Praise Should be Given Incidentally and Unobtrusively.**—To hurl an unexpected compliment often produces embarrassment. Persons unfamiliar with the world, or unskilled in conversation, often express and usually feel a dislike for public praise, because they find themselves unable to make adroit reply, and are consequently more vexed to be embarrassed than gratified to be complimented.

Few have the frank self-possession of the young woman who said in reply to an overwhelming compliment from a German officer, "Really, general, we American girls are so unused to compliments that we never have anything to reply; we only giggle."

A compliment is most grateful when it comes from one who seems unconscious that he is bestowing it. An admiring glance, a disposition to linger near one, close attention when one is speaking, appeal to one's judgment and deference to one's decisions—all these silent manifestations of respect carry weight that words can hardly add to.

The slightest turn of a reply may convey a delicate compliment, as where one, instead of congratulating a friend upon securing a position, expresses his pleasure that the position is to be so well filled.

To one who was humbly grateful for an office bestowed, Louis XIV. replied: "Had I known a more deserving person I would not have selected him." By omitting the *not* in this reply Matthews (in *The Great Conversers*, page 25), spoils the story, making the monarch *declare* that he knows no person more deserving. As spoken, the compliment only implied this, and was thus graceful instead of fulsome. Campbell tells the same story, but locates it in England.

To the question, "Are you engaged for this dance?" some foolish maidens reply that they do not think they are engaged, at the same time being thoroughly aware that they are not, and the young

men are also aware that the maidens are finessing and averse to making the direct admission that they are in want of partners. A young lady with tact and *aplomb* escapes this dilemma by replying with great readiness to the question, "I am very glad to say that I am not," which rejoinder is flattering to the young gentleman, giving him the impression that the young lady could have been engaged for this dance had she so pleased, but that she greatly preferred waiting for the chance of his asking her to dance. She may or may not have been actuated by this hope, but if by some expression of pleasure at not being engaged for the dance which is at the moment asked for she puts her partner on good terms with herself and himself it argues well for her success in the ball-room.  
—*Society Small Talk.*

**Attention to the Neglected.**—Compliments are especially grateful to those accustomed to be somewhat neglected. The snob is never more offensive than when in company he hastens to show his intimacy with the leading persons present. The gentleman is never more to be envied than when, by choosing the society of those whom others have passed by, he shows that he has no apprehension of being, like a silk hat, distinguishable only by the person to whom he is attached.

The root of all exclusiveness lies not only in pride, but in fear. It is a sign not only of selfishness, but of weakness and insecurity.  
—*The Spectator.*

A word of kindness or acknowledgment, or a single glance of approbation, might have changed Esmond's opinion of the great man (the Duke of Marlborough); and instead of a satire, which his pen cannot help writing, who knows but that the humble historian might have taken the other side of panegyric? We have but to change the point of view and the greatest action looks mean; as we turn a perspective glass and a giant appears a pigmy. You may describe, but who can tell whether your sight is clear or not, or your means of information accurate?

Had the great man said but a word of kindness to the small one (as he would have stepped out of his way to shake hands with Laz-

arus in rags and sores, if he thought Lazarus could have been of any service to him), no doubt Esmond would have fought for him with pen and sword to the utmost of his might ; but my lord lion did not want master mouse at this moment, and so Muscipulus went out and nibbled in opposition.—THACKERAY.

**Praise Should be Honest.**—"Flattery is the worst sort of falsehood. Other lies are generally detected, and the liar exposed and punished ; but flattery is a kind of untruth which the person for whom it was intended does not desire to detect, and when others demonstrate to him its falsity he is slow to admit it, because he loves to believe it true. Other falsehoods may expose us to the loss of friends, fame, or wealth ; but this nourishes into a monstrous growth the original pride of the fallen soul, and involves us more and more in guilt and self-ignorance, and consequently in ignorance of others."

How is it that whenever you are thrown into the company of an unusually polite—an over-polite—person, you almost immediately distrust him ? There comes to you, acting on the nervous part of you, of which you know so little, a sense of doubt. You are not averse to polite bearing and manners—nay, you like them ; you even find it pleasant to receive the compliments so readily and glibly offered to you ; to see the amiable smile ; to watch the bowing head ; and there is something in the sense of reverence and respect as expressed toward yourself very flattering to your *amour propre*.

Yet in spite of it all you are not sure of your companion's honesty. You are inclined to suspect that there is something cynical behind that smile ; something hollow at the back of the compliment ; something unreal in the look of regard. And you do not know in the least why you have this feeling, only you know you have it. At the same time you find it so agreeable to be made so much of, to find your opinions suddenly of value in the eyes of your fellow, that you lull to rest the spirit of doubt which rises within you, and you resolve to believe your new friend an exceedingly polished and very delightful man.—*Home Journal*.

But there is no resentment more bitter than one feels on being convinced that what one had received as genuine admiration was but a skilful semblance, fabricated perhaps with a sneering contempt for the weakness that could be cajoled by it.

To this danger the indiscriminate flatterer is constantly exposed. Each of a dozen acquaintances yields ear to his adulation and trusts him as an appreciative friend; but when a few of the dozen get together and compare notes, their chagrin at being deceived is transformed into resentment against the deceiver, the more bitter from recognition of their own blindness.

**The Safest Praise is Quotation.**—No form of commendation is more unobjectionable than the repetition to a person of pleasant remarks others have made about him.

If I tell John that James says he shall never forget John's kindness to him in sickness, John is trebly gratified: first, that James is appreciative, which James may have been too bashful to say directly; second, that James has spoken well of him to others; and finally, that I show my good will by repeating what James has said. As the busy-body creates dissensions by tattling unkind words, so he that will take pains to remember and to repeat the happy things his friends say of one another brings those about him into amity and good-feeling.

**Compliments the Happiest Avenue of Wit.**—No other department of conversation affords such opportunities for tact and wit. However we may be struck by the brilliancy of a satirist's scathing speech, there is always behind our admiration a mingled dislike and dread. But he who puts pleasant things into happy words is indeed to be envied. We need not stint our admiration for a witty speech prompted by a kind heart.

"Oh, Mr. Smith," cried a pretty girl, pointing to some sweet peas, "those sweet peas will never come to perfection."

"Permit me, then," said the witty divine, taking her hand, "to conduct perfection to the sweet peas."

To Condé, afflicted with gout, who apologized for mounting the stairs slowly on his return as victor from the battle of Benef, Louis XIV. replied, "Do not hurry, cousin; no one so loaded with laurels could come more quickly."

At this court even a protest was so uttered as to confirm the obnoxious judgment while it diverted it. Annoyed at the pertinacity of an officer, the king exclaimed: "That gentleman is the most troublesome officer in the whole army." "Your majesty's enemies have often said so," was the reply.

"Will madam permit me to take her portrait in profile?" asks a French painter of a patron who had the misfortune to be cross-eyed; "there is a shyness about one of her ladyship's eyes that is as difficult in art as it is fascinating in nature."

**Bantering Compliments.**—Among those quick of wit and speech compliments often pass into banter, a humorous exaggeration as far removed from flattery as from ill-nature.

Thus in the ball-room a gentleman remarks:

"I envy that butterfly perched so daintily on your hair, close to that shell-like ear. What secrets would I not whisper were I so near. Happy butterfly!"

The rejoinder might be made in the same spirit of fun:

"The butterfly is not so happy as you think; I shut it up in a velvet case when I go home, for fear of losing it. Now, one could not shut you up, and you would not like it if one could."

Or the retort might be, "Unlike you, my butterfly has no feeling, so it does not appreciate its happiness, which is, I believe, characteristic of butterflies; *you* ought to know something about it."

Here the answer might be:

"You are kind enough to anticipate my future. I have not found my wings as yet; I am still in a chrysalis state."

A lady desirous of having the last word might be tempted to say:

"Then you are safer to hold, if not so pretty to keep; so I think

on the whole you had better retain your chrysalis state for the present."—*Society Small Talk*.

Small talk like this is possible only when both persons have good sense and ready humor. No blunder could be more mortifying than to reply seriously to a compliment of this sort; and it is a mistake to press such compliments upon those so matter-of-fact or so slow of wit as to be unable either to reply to them or to understand them.

**Receiving Compliments.**—Except from an older or a trusted companion, the safest way to receive compliments, however genuine, is to turn them lightly, or to treat them as banter or good-natured exaggeration.

A French writer recommends that when praised by another one seem to be inattentive, or in a reverie. This is as rude as it is absurd, and seems to say, "Go on with your compliments; I enjoy them too much to interrupt you."

Two gentlemen, occupying similar positions, were introduced to the same audience, in speeches equally laudatory. One began his remarks by expressing the wish that these commendations had been reserved for the close of his discourse, when it might be better judged whether they were deserved—an introduction meant to be modest, but really implying that the speaker thought it quite possible they would prove to have been deserved.

The other laughingly waved off the compliments with his hand, remarking that he used to have the chairman for a pupil, and though, on the whole, he was proud of him, he was sorry to see that the boy's early habit of exaggeration was not yet outgrown. "But of course you all know him well enough to make due allowance," he continued, and then went on with his address, already secure of the good-will of his audience.

#### REPROOF.

**Occasion Less Frequent than for Compliment.**—The true friend finds reproof sometimes necessary, but he will assure himself that it is necessary, and he

will convey it with all the discretion and delicacy of which he is capable.

Young people usually have to learn by experience that when their friends exhibit peculiarities the probability is that the peculiarities have reasons which, though perhaps concealed, are entirely adequate. It is in presumptuously meddling with other people's affairs that fools ofteneast rush in where angels fear to tread.

The late Professor Skoda, one of Vienna's greatest surgeons, had until a year or two before his death worn garments of a most unfashionable cut; the trousers were baggy, and the coats most ingeniously ill fitting. His friends often joked with him about the matter, and Skoda bore their ridicule good-naturedly, without making any explanation.

One day a friend observed that he was for a wonder clothed in well-fitting garments of the latest cut. "This is an unhopd-for pleasure," he cried, "to see you for once properly dressed." "Say no more;" said the surgeon gravely, "he who has made my clothing for all the years you have known me did not, it is true, give it a very fashionable shape. But he let me have it long before I achieved success; and he never pressed me for money when he suspected that I was pressed for it myself. How would you do, my friend—leave such a man for one who cut clothing of a different shape?" "But why, then, do you leave him now?" "He is dead," replied Skoda.

**Reproof May be Disguised.**—The emperor Adrian, seeing a chief officer whom he knew to be envious and malignant turn his back to desert him in battle, stopped him and said affably, "You are going wrong, I perceive; this is your way." The officer turned his horse as if it had been a simple mistake of his, and not a premeditated flight.

Often reproof may be effectually conveyed by good-natured ridicule or exaggerated imitation. "Are your

apples no larger than that in this country?" asked an Englishman, pointing to the pumpkins on a market-man's stand. "Apples," replied the market-man, with great contempt; "do you call them little things apples? Them's huckleberries."

It happened in a New Hampshire town that a young native after several years of knocking about returned to his home. There was a gathering round the stove in the village store that winter evening, and he was listened to with open-mouthed wonder as he related his experiences.

But there was one in the company who sat apart, smoked his pipe in silence, and gave no sign of either interest or astonishment. At last one of the party, nettled by his apathy, turned to him and said: "What's the matter with you? You don't seem to warm up a bit." "No," he replied, slowly, removing his pipe from his mouth, "I'm a liar myself."—*Boston Cultivator*.

But where given directly it should be open and manly. "If I must suffer," said the old philosopher, "I would rather it should be from the paw of a lion than from the hoof of an ass."

Sometimes circumstances seem to warrant somewhat vigorous treatment.

"What would you do if you were I and I were you?" tenderly inquired a swell of a young woman whom he had insisted upon escorting home from church. "Well," she replied, "if I were you I should throw away that vile cigarette, cut up my cane for firewood, wear my watch underneath my coat, and stay at home nights to pray for brains." The walk was finished in silence, and it is presumed that for once in his life the young man thought hard.—*Hackensack Republican*.

**Reproof Should be Private.**—When Socrates reproved Plato at a feast, Plato replied that it had been better to tell him of his fault in private, for to mention it in public was an impropriety. Socrates answered: "And so it is for you publicly to condemn that impropriety."



**Commendation Should Accompany Re-proof.**—It should be manifest that we disapprove not the man but this particular fault in the man, and the more because we find so much else in the man to like. Thus given, reproof becomes a compliment, for unless we felt a special interest in the offender we should not disturb ourselves to correct him.

The second class of old people are not anecdotic ; they are rather hearers than talkers, listening to the young with an amused and critical attention. To have this sort of intercourse to perfection I think we must go to old ladies. Women are better hearers than men, to begin with ; they learn, I fear with anguish, to bear with the tedious and infantile vanity of the other sex ; and we will take more from a woman than even from the oldest man in the way of biting comment.

Biting comment is the chief part, whether for profit or amusement, in this business. If the old lady that I have in my eye is a very caustic speaker, her tongue, after years of practice, is in absolute command, whether for silence or attack. If she chance to dislike you, you will be tempted to curse the malignity of age. But if you chance to please, even slightly, you will be listened to with a particular laughing grace of sympathy, and from time to time chastised, as if in play, with a parasol as heavy as a pole-axe.

It requires a singular art, as well as the vantage ground of age, to deal these stunning corrections among the coxcombs of the young. The pill is disguised in sugar of wit ; it is administered as a compliment—if you had not pleased, you would not have been censured ; it is a personal affair—a hyphen—a *trait d'union*, between you and your censor ; age's philandering, for her pleasure and your good.

Incontestably the young man feels very much of a fool ; but he must be a perfect Malvolio, sick with self-love, if he cannot take an open buffet and still smile. The correction of silence is what kills ; when you know you have transgressed, and your friend says nothing, and avoids your eye. If a man were made of gutta-percha his heart would quail at such a moment.

But when the word is out, the worst is over ; and a fellow with

any good humor at all may pass through a perfect hail of witty criticism, every bare place on his soul hit to the quick with a shrewd missile, and reappear, as if after a dive, tingling with a fine moral reaction—and ready, with a shrinking readiness, one-third loath, for a repetition of the discipline.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

### **Faults Should be Mentioned One at a Time.**

—“We ought to beware of reminding another of too many faults at one time. There are few who can bear accusation upon accusation. It is wisest first to suggest amendment in one particular, and then wait to see whether the hint is heeded; if not, we can hardly hope that farther admonition will be.”

Queen Caroline pressed Bishop Runkle to tell her of her faults. “If it so please your majesty,” said he, “I will tell you of one. It is to be lamented that you talk so much with the king during divine service.” “Thank you, my lord bishop,” said the queen; “now tell me another of my faults.” “That I will do with great pleasure,” said he, “when you have corrected the one I have just mentioned.”—*HERVEY*.

### **The Command of Friendly Solitude.**—

Finally, reproof should be the command of friendly solicitude. As the offspring of vanity, of censoriousness, of brutality, of desire to trample on another's feelings and watch his writhings—it is detestable. “Many coarse and curt-tongued people who boast themselves honest, are base mongrels generated between the knave and the fool.”

It is astonishing how very many people there are who, seemingly unable to draw a line between deception and reticence, commonly associate insincerity with courtesy, bluntness with honesty, as though the attempt to make things pleasant must necessarily involve deceit, as if there were a certain incompatibility between truthfulness and consideration for the feelings of others. How often do we hear the remark, “Oh, —— is a very good fellow, but I don't quite trust him, he's too civil by half,” or “You must not mind ——'s rough manner, it's only his honest, outspoken way; he cannot help saying what he thinks.” And so, on the strength of a reputation for honesty, the plain, blunt man sneers at or ignores the polish which prevents unpleasant friction, and expects to be allowed to elbow his way through life, priding himself upon the abrupt utterance of unpleasant truths, disconcerting some people, irritating and vexing others, and, by way of

asserting his own individuality, treading without compunction upon his neighbor's finest feelings, and oftentimes leaving his heavy footprints upon hearts that are tender, sad, or sorrowful. Persons of strong will and strong opinions are, perhaps, the most prone to this species of self-assertion, being much given to measuring and judging everything by their own fixed ideas, and to showing an undisguised contempt for those who differ from them; but so far from a blunt, discourteous, fault-finding spirit, with a keen eye for blemishes and defects, and a dull apprehension of merit, being in any way desirable, it only proves a man wanting in one of the most necessary of social virtues, viz.: sympathy. In every discourteous act he says practically, "Your comfort and convenience are of no importance to me, you are a person of no consequence whatever," and naturally under this treatment resentment is aroused, good-will vanishes, and affection melts away.—*Golden Hours*.

When Mr. Emerson's celestial hide-and-sock was over, and the entranced audience were reluctantly going down the aisle, a venerable old trustee of the college, whose beautiful white head was its crown of glory for many years, whispered to me with a smile and half a sigh: "Times have changed! It is just twenty years ago since we had him here last to address this same literary society. When he had finished, the president, as was the custom, called upon the clergyman to conclude the service with prayer. Rev. Mr. ———, of W———, in this State, stepped into the pulpit which Mr. Emerson had just vacated and uttered a very remarkable prayer, of which I can remember only one sentence exactly: 'We beseech thee, O Lord, to deliver us from over hearing any more such transcendent nonsense as we have just listened to from this sacred desk.'" "And what did Mr. Emerson say?" "Nothing—oh, yes; after the benediction he asked of his next neighbor the name of the officiating clergyman, and, when falteringly answered, with gentle simplicity remarked: 'He seems a very conscientious, plain-spoken man,' and went on his peaceful way."—*Atlantic Monthly*.

The following anecdote of the founder of Methodism has, we believe, never been published. It reaches us from a trustworthy source, and it illustrates in a remarkable manner the mingled piety and tact of that eminent man.

Although Wesley, like the Apostles, found that his preaching did not greatly affect the mighty or the noble, still he numbered some families of good position among his followers. It was at the house of one of these that the incident here recorded took place.

Wesley had been preaching, and a daughter of a neighboring gentleman, a girl remarkable for her beauty, had been profoundly impressed by his exhortations. After the sermon Wesley was invited to the gentleman's house to luncheon, and with himself one of his preachers was entertained. This preacher, like many of the class at that time, was a man of plain manners, and not conscious of the restraints of good society. The fair young Methodist sat beside him at the table, and he noticed that she wore a number of rings.

During a pause in the meal the preacher took hold of the young lady's hand, and, raising it in the air, called Wesley's attention to the sparkling jewels.

"What do you think of this, sir," he said, "for a Methodist's hand?"

The girl turned crimson. For Wesley, with his known and expressed aversion to finery, the question was a peculiarly awkward one. But the aged evangelist showed a tact which Chesterfield might have envied. He looked up with a quiet, benevolent smile, and simply said: "The hand is very beautiful."

The girl had expected something very different from a reproof wrapped up in such a felicity of compliment. She had the good sense to say nothing; but when, a few hours later, she again appeared in Wesley's presence, the beautiful hand was stripped of every ornament except those which nature had given.—*London Society*.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### COMMENDATION.

**IMPORTANCE OF APPRECIATION**, p. 45.

**PRAISE** should be judicious, p. 46.

should be definite, p. 48.

should come from those qualified to bestow it, p. 49.

should be given unobtrusively, p. 50.

should be given where most needed, p. 51.

should be honest, p. 52.

The safest praise is quotation, p. 53.

**COMPLIMENTS THE HAPPIEST AVENUE OF WIT**, p. 53.

Bantering compliments, p. 54.

How to receive compliments, p. 55.

### REPROOF.

Occasion less frequent, p. 55.

May be disguised, p. 56.

Should be open and manly, when direct, p. 57.

Should be private, p. 57.

Accompanied by commendations, p. 58.

Only occasional, p. 59.

The command of friendly solicitude, p. 59.

### SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What do you consider most important, and most likely to be useful, praise or reproof ?

Do you agree with Sydney Smith (page 128) that the dread of ridicule improves manners ?

What had Mr. Juvenis (page 47) better have said ?

How may young people (page 47) most quickly "unlearn contempt" ?

Would Mr. Bryant's praise (page 48) have pleased the author ?

Do you justify Plato (page 57) ?

## CHAPTER V.

### DISCUSSION.

In reply to a question whether there had been any conversation at a party from which he had just come. Dr. Johnson replied: "No, sir; we had *talk* enough, but no *conversation*; there was nothing *discussed*."

**Advantages and Dangers.**—Sydney Smith has thus epitomized the advantages and the dangers of argument in conversation :

"When two men meet together who love truth, and discuss any difficult point with good-nature and a respect for each other's understandings, it always imparts a high degree of steadiness and certainty to our knowledge; or, what is of nearly equal value and certainly of greater difficulty, it convinces us of our ignorance. It is an exercise grossly abused by those who have recourse to it, and is very apt to degenerate into a habit of perpetual contradiction, which is the most tiresome and the most *disgusting* in all the catalogue of imbecilities. It is an exercise which timid men dread—from which irritable men ought to abstain; but which, in my humble opinion, advances a man who is calm enough for it and strong enough for it, far beyond any other method of employing the mind."

Let us examine these specifications in detail.

**Contradiction is Not Argument.**—Axiomatic as this principle seems when stated, one seldom listens long to an argument without hearing it violated. It is always easier to assert than to prove, especially those opinions in which we have grown up, and which seem to us as fundamental facts as light, and air, and water.

Says Augustine, "If you ask me what is time, I do not know; but I know quite well if you do not ask me."

It is as difficult to defend life as it is to define it. Unless a man knows what life is, we cannot define it to him; unless he feels that it is good to live, we cannot refute him when he argues that it would have been better not to have been born.

"Give your judgment," said an old judge to a younger brother on the bench, "but don't give your reasons. The judgment may be right, but the reasons are pretty sure to be wrong."

After all, however, in some subjects no language can accurately convey (to the inexperienced, at least), all the indications which influence the judgment of an acute and practised observer. And hence it has been justly and happily remarked that "he must be an indifferent physician who never takes any step for which he cannot assign a satisfactory reason."—WHATELY.

Besides, there is hardly any question so firmly settled that ingenuity will not devise an argument plausible enough to startle one if it come upon one unexpected.

A criminal, convicted of the murder of his father and mother, and asked if he had anything to say for himself, merely begged that the judge would have mercy upon a poor orphan.

An Iowa man, annoyed that a relative would concede no superiority in that State over New Hampshire, at last exclaimed, "At least you'll admit that Iowa is bigger." "I don't know about that," was the cautious reply; "maybe it is a little further from end to end, all flattened out into a level; but if you wrinkled it up into mountains six thousand feet high, I guess you wouldn't cover much more floor-space than the old Granite State."

Archdeacon Denison was once closely pressed in an argument, but had evidently resolved to die hard. At length his antagonist, a virtuous engineer of the Smiles ideal, lost all patience at the irregular warfare of the archdeacon. "Look here, sir," he exclaimed, despairingly, "do you acknowledge that two and two make four?" "I am not prepared to make an admission of that importance," replied the archdeacon, "till I have given the subject the maturest consideration. Sometimes it is supposed that they make twenty-two."

Perhaps nothing could seem more hopeless than to argue that revenge was a factor of civilization, and yet it will probably be no

slight task to refute the following plea from a recent number of the *Pall Mall Gazette*:

"In savage society, that is, in any society where law has no force, from Texas to Greenland—revenge takes the place of faith, hope, charity, and justice. It is the virtue without which the social organization would cease to exist. Tribes and families could scarcely have survived if the members of either association had good-naturedly abstained from revenging themselves. Nothing could have prevented the scores of rival families and tribes from exterminating people who did not resent an injury.

"Now, it is imprudent to make a duty which is universal too difficult of accomplishment. It would have been difficult always to hit upon and slay the man who was guilty of each particular offence to person or property. Early custom, therefore, permitted revenge to be taken on any blood relations of the culprit within seven degrees. A man speared your grandmother because your uncle had devoured his nephew. Your duty was done if you tortured his second cousin to death over a slow fire. Honor and custom were satisfied for the moment.

"This does not seem a promising state of things, and yet it was full of the seeds of milder manners. Families became interested in preventing even their poor relations from using axe or bow too hastily. There was no satisfaction in being speared because some long-lost uncle or cousin, with whom one was not on speaking terms, had indulged himself in a man-slaughter. Thus the members of families found it convenient to keep an eye on each other's movements, and to give up their culprits to be dealt with by a central authority. Gradually law came into existence, and revenge ceased to be the chief end of man."

The fact is, few people appreciate the difficulty of defending an opinion against a skilful opponent; and those who fail to detect a fallacy, or lose sight of their own main argument, have the annoyance of feeling that though they *are* right they cannot prove that they are.

Sometimes the truth may be established by reducing a fallacious conclusion to a practical absurdity.

"Father," said a Freshman, home on his first vacation, "how many chickens are there on the table?"

"Two, my son."

"No, sir, there are three, and I can prove it. There is one, isn't there?"

"Yes, my son."

"And there (pointing to the other) is two, isn't there?"

"Yes, my son."

"And one and two make three, don't they?"

"Yes, my son; what a great thing learning is, to be sure. Well, since there are three chickens there, I will hand this one to your

mother, I will take this one myself, and you shall have the third for your logic."

Especially humiliating are the defeats of those who, having listened to a single argument or read a single treatise on some subject hitherto uninvestigated by them, suppose that they have mastered the subject itself, and in proceeding to make converts happen upon somebody who knows not only this argument and its history, but a dozen that refute it.

How such a disputant appears to a man of broad information is thus illustrated in Coleridge's "Table-Talk :

Mr. — is, I suppose, one of the rising young men of the day ; yet he went on talking the other evening and making remarks with great earnestness, some of which were palpably irreconcilable with each other. He told me that facts gave birth to and were the absolute ground of principles ; to which I said that unless he had a principle of selection he would not have taken notice of those facts on which he grounded his principle. You must have a lantern in your hand to give light, otherwise all the materials in the world are useless, for you could not find them, and if you could you could not arrange them.

"But then," said Mr. —, "*that* principle of selection came from facts."

"To be sure," I replied, "but there must have been again an antecedent light to see those antecedent facts. The relapse may be carried in imagination backwards forever, but go back as you may you cannot come to a man without a previous aim or principle."

He then asked me what I had to say to "Bacon's Induction." I told him I had a good deal to say, if need were ; but that it was perhaps enough for the occasion to remark that what he was very evidently taking for the Baconial *Induction* was mere *Deduction*—a very different thing.

When practical demonstration is impracticable, and especially when one begins to feel his position really inse-



cure, the temptation is strong to make up in loudness of tone what one lacks in clearness of thought, and to substitute contradiction for argument. Since this impulse is felt even by a man honestly defending his convictions, it is easy to conceive the fascination it has for the young man without convictions who is merely anxious to attract attention.

“What did you think of my argument?” asks Jones of a comrade.

“It was sound—very sound; in fact, it was nothing but sound.”

Here even Dr. Johnson showed weakness.

This grew in part out of his love for paradox, in which feature he bore a strong resemblance to the wits of Madame Geoffrin's *salon*. To this source is to be attributed the strange lack of uniformity and consistency in his opinions, it being his custom to be in the opposition, to whichever side of the question he might be driven. At one time good and at another evil was predominant in the constitution of the world. Now he would deplore the non-observance of Good Friday, and now deny that there was any decline in the observance of religious festivals. He would sometimes contradict self-evident propositions, such as that the luxury of the country had increased with its riches, and that the practice of card-playing was more general than formerly. He would meet a sound argument with a “What then, sir?” or a “You do not see your way through the question, sir,” or, “Sir, you talk the language of ignorance;” and when he was compelled to give his assent, which he always did reluctantly, he would preface it with a “Why no, sir.”—HERVEY.

The habit of contradicting, into which young men—and young men of ability in particular—are apt to fall, is a habit extremely injurious to the powers of the understanding. I would recommend to such young men an intellectual regimen of which I myself, at an earlier period of life, have felt the advantages: and that is, to assent to the first two propositions that they hear every day; and not only to assent to them, but, if they can, to improve and embellish them, and to make the speaker a little more in love with his

own opinion than he was before. When they have a little got over the bitterness of contradicting they may then gradually increase the number of assents, and so go on as their constitution will bear it, and I have little doubt that in time this will effect a complete and perfect cure.—SYDNEY SMITH.

**The Strife Should be Not for Victory, but for Truth.**—Among the advantages of discussion enumerated by Sydney Smith there is no mention of gratifying one's vanity by showing that one can confute a companion ; yet with many disputants that would seem the sole occasion for argument. No self-defeat could be more utter. Grant that such a one has nothing to learn, that wisdom will die with him, that the sole purpose of argument is to display one's skill, and yet he fails of his end ; for the success in argument is attained not by confuting, but by convincing ; and a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.

It costs a man less to admit that his heart is hard than that his brain is weak. Often one persists in error to escape confessing that he has been in error. Such a person may be led gently and circuitously to positions into which he could never be pushed, as has been illustrated so well in the fable of the north and the south winds. By a series of flank movements, skilfully continued, he may be induced to propose as original, and to urge upon his opponent the very view which that opponent has artfully implanted, knowing that the germ thus unconsciously received would develop into a conviction against which in its completeness he would have revolted. This is art concealing art, a perfection impossible to the egotist, who is never content unless his agency is manifest. As he is the best executive who never meddles with what is already satisfactory, and who knows that he is governing best when he seems not to be governing at all, so he achieves the greatest victory in argument who seems never to care for victory, who is willing to seem to be informed by his opponent of the very principles it has taken him hours to instil into that opponent.

It may be urged that this mode of argument is insidious ; that

to seem to be convinced by another of what one is really convincing him involves an element of deception. But in itself the method is simply a concession to another's weakness, and to employ it is right or wrong according as our purpose is to impress the truth or to instil an error. That it is a frequent device of evil men merely shows that it is time good men were familiar with it. We are commanded to be wise as serpents, as well as harmless as doves.

Besides, among fair-minded men this is much more likely to lead to truth than the "bow-wow" manner of Dr. Johnson, crushing down opposition and enforcing silence where one cannot carry conviction. One often starts out to convert another, and ends by being himself converted, because a fair discussion reveals new considerations. But if one is intent upon discomfiting and demolishing an opponent, one will seek rather to silence him than to hear him.

"I am one who would gladly be refuted if I should say anything not true, and would gladly refute another should he say anything not true; but would no less gladly be refuted than refute; for I deem it a greater advantage to be freed from the greatest of evils than to free another; and nothing, I conceive, is so great an evil as a false opinion on matters of moral concernment."—SOCRATES (in the *Gorgias* of Plato).

Swift has observed that "it is a short way to obtain the reputation of a wise and reasonable man, whenever anybody tells you his opinion, to agree with him." But this is satire, and must be taken with a whole bag full of salt. The companion we value most is he who gives us new thoughts and suggestions, but so skilfully as never to wound our self-love. We enjoy most, not the argument in which our opponent yields without an effort, but that in which he strives manfully and ably, and finally barely yields, just as we were ourselves losing confidence in our own side.

A story is told of a man thrown from his horse and obliged to lie for weeks at an inn where he could get no other reading than a lot of agricultural reports. For sheer lack of other occupation

he studied agriculture as a science, not dreaming it would ever be of use to him. But a while after he wanted to marry the daughter of a wealthy farmer who was opposed to a city young man for a son-in-law. Bethinking himself of his agricultural information, he began to devote his visits to the father instead of the daughter, argued with him for hours on questions of which the farmer had far less general knowledge, and regularly pushed the farmer, point by point, to where defeat stared him in the face, and then unobtrusively suggested considerations which the farmer seized and won the victory with, while the young man won the daughter.

Some special suggestions may be of service.

**a. Be Always Ready to Listen.**—Reason teaches that the first step in a sound argument is to ascertain how far one agrees with one's opponent, and at what point their convictions begin to diverge.

There is something extremely fascinating in quickness, and most men are desirous of appearing quick. The great rule for becoming so is *by not attempting to appear quicker than you really are*; by resolving to understand yourself and others, and to know what you mean and what they mean, before you speak or answer. Every man must submit to be slow before he is quick, and insignificant before he is important. The too early struggle against the pain of obscurity corrupts no small share of understandings.—SYDNEY SMITH.

Before the late civil war, when opinions were the most pronounced, a merchant in Boston was arguing as to some political measure. The discussion had continued for some time, and was growing warm, when his friend exclaimed :

“But you are too fast, Mr. — ; you begin by assuming that slavery is wrong.” “Sir,” said the merchant, stepping nervously back, “I am willing to give money and time to educating the masses on this question, but you must take your chances with the crowd ; I have no time to spend on an individual fool. Good morning.”

**b. Concede All that is Unessential.**—Nothing more distinguishes a great mind from a little one than

recognition of the essential, and concentration upon it. This is indicated in the very word *magnanimity*, great-mindedness, which yields to an opponent everything but the essential truth.

For instance, your opponent should be free to use his own language and methods of reasoning. His mind will be occupied enough with the thought, and should be allowed to express itself according to habit. To divert it by verbal criticism would merely distract and confuse.

"Now, my man," said a lawyer to his witness, "tell us exactly what passed."

"Yes, sir. I said I would not have the pig."

"And what was his answer?"

"He said he had been keeping it for me, and that he——"

"No, no, he could not have said that. He spoke in the first person."

"No, sir, I was the first person who spoke."

"Don't bring in the third person; repeat his exact words."

"There was no third person, sir; only him and me."

"My good fellow, he did not say 'He had been keeping the pig.' He said, 'I have been keeping the pig.'"

"I assure you, sir, there was no mention made of yourself at all. We are on different stories. There was no third person there, and if anything had been said about your keeping a pig for me I should have heard it."

*Cross-examination.*—In this case, if the witness had been called for the prosecution, it might have been claimed that it was the lawyer's object to confuse him, and thereby render his testimony valueless. The following is an example of a sort of cross-questioning sometimes supposed to be as effective as it is unfair.

"You say you know Mr. Smith."

"Yes, sir."

"You swear you know him?"

"Yes, sir."

"You mean you are acquainted with him?"

"Yes, sir, acquainted with him."

"Oh, you don't know him; you are merely acquainted with him. Remember that you are on oath, sir. Now, be careful. You don't mean to tell the court that you know all about Mr. Smith, everything that he ever did?"

"No, I ——"

"That'll do, sir. No, you do not. Very good. So you are not acquainted with all his acts?"

"Of course ——"

"Stop there. Are you, or are you not?"

"No."

"That is to say you are not so well acquainted with him as you thought you were?"

"Possibly not."

"Just so. Now we begin to understand each other. If you don't know anything about Mr. Smith's acts when you are not with him, you can't swear that you know him, can you?"

"If you put it in that way——"

"Come, sir, don't seek to evade my question. I'll put it to you again. When you say you know Mr. Smith, you don't mean to say you know everything he does?"

"No, sir, of course not."

"Just so: of course not. Then you were not quite correct when you said you knew Mr. Smith?"

"No, sir."

"Ah, I thought so. That'll do, sir. You can stand down."—*Boston Transcript.*

Such questioning has made the witness-stand a terror to many worthy people, but its expediency may be questioned, even when its end is attained. For the case is tried before a judge or a jury quite ready to estimate the deserts of a client whose lawyer is obliged to rely upon such methods.

Besides, not all witnesses are easily brow-beaten. A cool head and a quick wit will often hurl upon the lawyer's head the very confusion he has heaped up for the witness—the more easily because the witness, like all weaker parties, has the sympathy of the spectators.

Even Daniel Webster occasionally met his match in such an encounter. In the somewhat famous case of Mrs. Bogen's will, which was tried in the Supreme Court, he appeared as counsel for the appellant. Mrs. Greenough, wife of the Rev. William Greenough, a tall, straight, queenly woman, with a keen black eye, a woman of great self-possession and decision of character, was called to the stand as a witness for the opposite side.

At a glance Webster saw that her testimony, if it contained anything of importance, would have great weight with the court and jury, and he resolved, if possible, to break her down.

Notwithstanding his repeated efforts to disconcert her, she calmly continued her testimony, until Webster, becoming fearful of the result, made a supreme effort. He arose, apparently in great agitation, drew out his large snuff-box, thrust his thumb and finger to the very bottom, carried the deep pinch to both nostrils, and drew it up with a gusto. Then extracting from his pocket a very large handkerchief, which flowed to his feet as he brought it to the front, he blew his nose with a report that rang distinct and loud through the crowded hall, and asked:

"Mrs. Greenough, was Mrs. Bogen a neat woman?"

"I cannot give full information as to that, sir. She had one very dirty trick."

"What was that, ma'am?"

"She took snuff."

The roar of the court-house was such that Mr. Webster sat down and neither rose nor spoke again till Mrs. Greenough had vacated her seat for another witness.

In reporting the Guiteau trial a newspaper correspondent wrote:

"Judge Porter's system of cross-examination is the antagonistic one. His aim is to break a witness down, to catch him in a lie or

a contradiction. This is the old method. It is more honored in the breach than in the observance. The subtlest modern lawyers, like Tilden, Evarts, Cushing, the late Lord Cockburn, and others, have won successes with the sympathetic method, which prove it by far the better, and which should relegate the antagonistic method to the limbo of the obsolete.

“The Porter method puts the witness on his mettle, teaches him the processes of the lawyer, enables him to anticipate his purposes, makes his mind work like lightning, and breaks down the lawyer twice as often as it breaks down the witness.

“By the sympathetic method, the witness is never doubted, denounced, or discouraged. He is seduced into pouring out his version in a great variety of editions. His idiosyncrasies and weaknesses are deferred to. A fatal fluency in him is excited by all the arts known to courtesy and acting. The examiner shows his every feeling, and the witness is delighted—until the summing up. He then finds, if he has not suspected it before, that he is likely to have issued about five versions of every fact, which differ enough to be easily made to seem conflicting; and that such a photograph of his weaknesses has been taken as, under the light of logic and sarcasm, tells trenchantly against him with the jury and with the public. He forgets the lawyer and himself in his pleasure to talk and talk again. The lawyer never forgets him once, as the summing up shows.”

**c. Stop When No Approach is Making to Truth.**—“Discoverers of truth,” says Cowper, “are generally sober, modest, and humble; and if their discoveries are less valued by mankind than they deserve to be, can bear the disappointment with patience and equality of temper. But hasty reasoners and confident asserters are generally wedded to an hypothesis, and, transported with joy at their fancied acquisitions, are impatient under contradictions, and go wild at the thought of a refutation.”

1. *Never Compel Discussion.*—“To compel a man to discuss with you who cannot play the game, and does not like it,” says Sydney Smith, “is as unfair as to compel a

person to play at chess with you under similar circumstances." For this reason it is rude to continually compel expression of opinions by inquiry, or by appending a "Don't you think so?" to a statement of one's own views, since it forces one's companion either to assent to what he may not believe, or to formulate and defend an opinion that is but vague, and that he is not interested enough in to dwell upon.

2. *Avoid Discussion with Those Unfitted for It.*—When Hercules descended to the lower world he was confronted by the shade of Medusa. He was about to draw his sword, when Mercury reminded him that it was only a phantom. He returned his sword to his scabbard. Even Hercules had no strength to waste on a shadow.

But when a detrimental opinion, though absurd and trivial in itself, is likely to gain currency from the earnestness and pretension of its advocates, it then becomes our duty to set it in a proper light. In silencing such persons we must proceed according to the lights and shades of circumstances. Solomon points out both the Scylla and the Charybdis, of which he would have us steer clear. On the one hand we have, "Answer a fool according to his folly lest he be wise in his own conceit;" on the other, "Answer not a fool according to his folly lest thou be like unto him." The first direction is applicable to cases where pride or vanity calls aloud for rebuke. If he is impudent or rude, we are to treat him with severity; if positive, we must be equally positive, and not be tender of the feelings of one who is destitute of the sensibilities of the human kind. By a satirical imitation of his own language we are to show him to himself as a mirror; by copying his air, tone, or mode of reasoning we are to make him ashamed for his corruption and shallowness.

By the second direction we are to understand that it is not our duty to correct an immoral person in his own language, when it is profane or obscene, or to reply at all when his speech or behavior is of a description to render him undeserving of the intercourse of his species, or when a reply would be a self-degradation.—HERVEY.



A day or two ago when a servant opened the side door of a house on Sibley Street, in response to a tramp's knock, her face looked so kind and benevolent that the hungry man had no doubt that a good dinner awaited him. He had, however, laid out a certain programme, and he therefore began :

"My dear woman, I haven't had anything to eat for two days, and I wanted to ask if you would spare me one of those icicles which has fallen from the eaves?"

"Well, I dunno," she slowly replied, as she looked out, "I suppose we might spare you one, if you are really suffering, but, of course, you won't take the largest and best?"

He stepped down and selected an icicle about two feet long, and, in a hesitating manner, inquired :

"If you would only sprinkle a little pepper on this I would be forever grateful."

"It's rather bold in you to ask it, but I suppose I can sprinkle on a little—a very little," she replied, and she got the pepper and dusted his "luncheon" very sparingly.

He started to move away, but, seeming to recollect something, he turned and said :

"You seem so benevolent I'll ask you to sprinkle on a little salt as well. I like my icicles seasoned up pretty high."

"You are a bold man, sir, and it's plain you have the appetite of a glutton, but I'll give you a bit of salt and then you must be gone," she replied.

When the icicle had been duly salted, the man expressed his thanks, but didn't move away. His game wasn't working to suit him. Some folks wouldn't have stood there and seen him bite off the end of a big icicle, but the girl did. And, further, when he hesitated to go, she indignantly called out :

"I know what you want. You now want me to warm the icicle in the oven for you and then put on some mustard, but I'll never, never do it!"

The man moved slowly out of the gate, and, as he threw his icicle at a passing dog, he gave utterance to his disgust in language punctuated entirely with slungshots.—*Detroit Free Press.*

3. *Avoid Discussion Too Weighty for the Occasion.*—A thoughtful man, introduced at a party to a lady whose appearance pleased him, found that she was familiar with the kindergarten system of instruction, in which he was just becoming interested. An earnest discussion followed, so delightful to both that they were thoroughly engrossed in each other, and parted with the warmest expressions of good will. Soon after, seeing her again, he was about to readdress her, when a friend interposed and said, "Mrs. ——— made me promise that I would keep you away from her this evening. She was so wrought up by your conversation the other night that she was ill for some days. She says your talk is too fascinating; she cannot bear the mental strain."

The gentleman was inclined to resent this excuse as

sarcastic, but his friend assured him the lady was entirely candid. She enjoyed talking with him; in the exhilaration of the moment she could sustain her part; but it was mental exertion too vigorous for her, and the reaction was painful.

4. *Do Not Introduce a Known Hobby.*—A hobby is by definition unreasonable—that is, unsustainable by argument; hence, after it has been stated and has become familiar, it is wearisome. In general one should be wary of introducing and continuing the discussion of subjects that circumstances make more interesting to him than to the rest of the company. The author's books, the actress's triumphs, the traveller's adventures, the veteran's battles, even a man's daily experience in his business or profession, all have their place in conversation, but only such place as the others cheerfully grant.

Even when a hobby is attacked, you will not aid yourself or your cause by disputing over it. If you are boldly attacked reputable people will give you much more credit for gracefully evading a strife of opinions than for entering upon it. Ladies who have a true claim to the name invariably appreciate and admire such conduct in a man. Much more skill and sagacity may be shown in refusing to argue than in so doing; the one who seeks to escape having the great advantage of being able to make his adversary appear determined to appear disagreeable and discourteous. —*Art of Conversation.*

For the same reason one should avoid reference to the hobbies of others.

You run a great hazard by making the slightest allusion to their favorite theme; they will, in all likelihood, hold your button an hour for your pains. When two or more persons are known to hold opposite opinions on a subject, and are used to dispute concerning it, we do well not to refer to the vexed question in their

hearing. To start that topic were as wanton a cruelty as it would be to set two pugnacious dogs by the ears.—HERVEY.

**d. Yield Gracefully when Convinced.**—Whately remarks: “It may be added that it is a very fair ground for disparaging any one’s judgment if he maintains any doctrine or system avowedly for the sake of consistency. That must be always a bad reason. If the system, etc., is right, you should pursue it because it is right, and not because you have pursued it hitherto; if it is wrong, your having once committed a fault is a poor reason for persisting in it. He, therefore, who makes such an avowal may thenceforward be considered as having no voice in the question. His decision having been already given, once for all, with a resolution not to reconsider it or to be open to conviction from any fresh arguments, his redeclarations of it are no more to be considered acts of judgment than new impressions from a stereotype plate are to be considered new editions.”

He that is never a fool, runs the proverb, is always a fool. Or, as Josh Billings puts it, “The wise man is not the one who never makes a mistake, but the one who never makes the same mistake twice.”

As a matter of fact, a certain dislike attaches to one who is never in the wrong, well illustrated in the following story:

To the celebrated Mme. Geoffrin, who assembled at her house the first men of letters of her time, the Marquis of Saint Lambert introduced an estimable man of learning, known by excellent works he had written on political economy.

For three months the poet’s *protégé* never failed to be present at the lady’s receptions, but one day when he was about to enter, a servant stopped him at the door and said gravely:

“Madame cannot see you to-day.”

“How—is she gone out? But I see M. Morrelet enter, and M.

Thomas. Why, there is the Abbé Delille humming an air at the window. Ha, good day, M. l'Abbé. How is our dear lady to-day? I'm sure she is at home."

"Madame, sir, cannot see you."

"But is she ill then? Of course not, since I hear Diderot's loud laugh, and if Mme. Geoffrin were not in health——"

"Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons, but I have simply to say that madame cannot see you."

The author bowed, and went to his patron.

He could make nothing of his strange reception. Had he committed some blunder? The author endeavored, but in vain, to show that he had been in the right in order to prove that Mme. Geoffrin was in the wrong. Saint Lambert listened to the end, and only interrupted the eloquent pleading with the words:

"You are in the right, my friend; a thousand times in the right."

When he had concluded, Saint Lambert took from the chimney-piece a letter, of which he broke the seal, and presented it to his *protégé*, inviting him to read it. It was addressed to the marquis by Mme. Geoffrin, and contained the following lines:

"I close my doors, my dear marquis, on your learned M. B——; should I see him often I should be vexed to death; and as it happens I am still a little attached to life—thanks to your friendship and that of the faithful few who resemble you. Your M. B—— is, in short, intolerable—*he is always in the right.*"

These few words enlightened all at once the learned man; and Saint Lambert took the opportunity to caution him against wearying his hearers by constantly and methodically dwelling upon facts, without advancing disputable opinions. Accordingly the polished economist adopted a new system for the barter of thought, and by advancing paradoxes and singular propositions was restored to the favor of Mme. Geoffrin; in fact he became one of the most entertaining and delightful conversationists in that coterie from which he had been so harshly expelled.—HERVEY.

**e. Finally, and Above All, Keep Good-Natured.**—However worsted in argument, a man is never thoroughly vanquished till he loses his temper.

We wonder what is the source of the mixture of sympathy—not to say approbation—with which pepperiness, as distinguished from bad temper, is generally treated by the literary world. . . . We dislike bad temper, but admiringly encourage a fiery temper, if it be only a fiery temper, and unless it explodes at our own expense we rather like the man who owns it the better. The choleric character in comedy is always a favorite, and we should very much like to know why.

No doubt part of the reason is that people always feel kindly to a character which in very marked and conspicuous aspects, at least, is within their power, and like a musical instrument will give out certain tones under their manipulation. It does not increase the respect for a man, but it does the feeling of fellowship with him, that he is sure to respond in a certain way to a certain stimulus, and that you possess the means of applying that stimulus at will. Such a man is liked, partly as a natural phenomenon, on the display of which under given circumstances you can always rely. Just as men like to show off a fine echo in a particular spot, and will elicit it day after day to the admiration of their different guests, so they like to show off the flashes of temper with which a friend answers the application of the well-known irritant. The pleasure in it is almost like the professional pleasure with which a medical practitioner sees the blister rise when he has applied the plaster, or the chemist, when he has predicted the liquidation of a gas, displays the result of the pressure he has applied. In short, these irascible tempers verify their friends' predictions and also illustrate their power of playing upon character.—*Foreign Magazine.*

How unmanly it is thus to be played upon is well illustrated in Hamlet's rebuke of Guildenstern.

*Ham.*—Will you play upon this pipe?

*Gull.*—My lord, I cannot.

*Ham.*—I pray you.

*Gull.*—Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.*—I do beseech you.

*Gull.*—I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.*—'Tis as easy as lying; govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

*Gull.*—But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

*Ham.*—Why, look you, now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play

upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. O' blood, do you think that I am easier to be play'd on than a pipe?

But temper uncontrolled is more than weakness.

Fiery words are the hot blast that inflames the fuel of our passionate nature, and formulated doctrine a hedge that confines the discursive wandering of the thoughts. In a personal altercation it is most often the stimulus men give themselves by stinging words that impels them to violent acts, and in argumentative discussion we find the most convincing support to our conclusions in the internal echo of the dogmas we have ourselves pronounced. Hence, extreme circumspection in the use of vituperative language, and in the adoption of phrases implying particular opinions, is not less a prudential than a moral duty; and it is equally important that we strengthen in ourselves kindly sympathies, generous impulses, noble aims, and lofty aspiration, by habitual freedom in their expression; and that we confirm ourselves in the great political, social, moral, and religious truths, to which calm investigation has led us, as final conclusions, by embodying them in forms of sound words.—MARSH.

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Contradiction not argument, pp. 62-67.

Difficulty of proving our beliefs, p. 64.

Strife for truth, not victory, p. 67.

### SPECIAL SUGGESTIONS.

a. Be always ready to listen, p. 69.

b. Concede all that is unessential, p. 69.

Legal cross-examination, pp. 70, 71.

c. Stop when no approach is making to truth, p. 72.

1. Never compel discussion, p. 72.

2. Avoid discussion with those unfitted, p. 73.

3. Avoid discussion too weighty for the occasion, p. 74.
4. Do not introduce a known hobby, p. 75.
- d. Yield gracefully when convinced, p. 76.  
Wrong to be always right, p. 76.
- e. Keep good-natured, pp. 77-79.

#### SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Is the cobbler's rule (page 267) a correct one ?

Do you agree with the *Foreign Magazine* (page 78) that a fiery temper obtains sympathy, and are the reasons given for this sufficient ?

What portion of the chapter do the following lines illustrate ?

The Centipede was happy quite,  
Until the Toad, in fun,  
Said, "Pray which leg goes after which ?"  
That worked her mind to such a pitch,  
She lay distracted in the ditch,  
Considering how to run.

## CHAPTER VI.

### STORY-TELLING.

It has often been my lot, in preaching to a rustic congregation, to be told by my hearers, by unmistakable outward signs which every preacher ought to be quick to recognize, that I have been running too long in one groove. On such occasions I generally use at the end of my period the cabalistic formula, *Now I am going to tell you a story.* It is like the adjutant's cry of "Attention!" to the regiment standing at ease; it is the unfailing "Open sesame" to blinking eyes; it acts as the sound of Blücher's guns at Waterloo, and gives the victory at once to virtue and wakefulness in those struggling hearers whose whole reserve of vital power has been engaged by nature in the huge effort of digesting their one weekly dinner worthy of the name.—BLACKLEY.

**As Illustration in Argument.**—The mind may reach a given truth either by studying cause and effect, or by perceiving an analogy. The first method requires trained faculties, and demands close attention. The latter is natural to every human being, and demands only comparison. Hence illustration is a main resource in argument. He who has at hand an apt story will carry conviction where logic would fail.

Of course, a story carries weight in argument only so far as it accords with general experience. A country deacon, riding to church with his daughter, saw two strange boys making for the brook with fishing-poles.

"My boys," the deacon said solemnly, "I knew two boys who went fishing on Sunday, and one of them was drowned."

"Pooh, that's nothing," was the indifferent reply; "I knew an old man who went to ride with a young woman on Sunday, and they were both struck by lightning."

**Anecdotes Only Adjuncts of Conversation.**  
—In general society stories are told less frequently to convince an opponent than to promote hilarity. When sub-



jects of general interest seem to have been exhausted they are sometimes a substitute for conversation; but usually they should be only adjuncts, suggested by something already said, and serving to illustrate it. The professional story-teller, especially the man with some two or three stock stories, is commonly as dreaded as he is despised.

Doddington falling asleep one day in the company of Sir Richard Temple, Lord Cobham, and others, one of the party reproached him for his drowsiness. He replied that he had lost nothing, for he could repeat all that Lord Cobham had been saying; and when challenged to do so, he repeated a story which Lord Cobham could but confess he had just told, and told no better. "And yet," said Doddington, "I did not hear one word of it; I went to sleep because I knew you always told this story at about this time."

On an occasion when Colonel Barre brought forward a motion on the British navy, Lord North said to a friend of his sitting next him: "Now Barre will give us our naval history from the beginning, not forgetting Sir Francis Drake and the Armada. All that is nothing to me, so let me sleep on, and wake me when we come near our own times." His friend at length aroused him, when Lord North exclaimed: "Where are we?" "At the battle of LaHogue, my Lord." "O, my dear friend," said North, "you have waked me a century too soon."

Especially contemptible is he who watches for opportunity so to turn the subject as to introduce his anecdote, and who thinks nothing of breaking into a conversation interesting and profitable, provided he thereby get an opening for his pet story.

An old gentleman whose favorite anecdote was about a gun, and who found it difficult to establish any natural connection between it and whatever happened to be the topic of conversation, used to stamp loudly upon the floor and exclaim: "Bless me, what's that? a gun? By the way, talking of guns, . . ." And then he told his story.

Men so obtuse are apt to miss the point of the stories they tell.

A man at dinner where a servant dropped a dish of tongue observing that a great laugh was created when the host remarked, "Merely a *lapsus lingue*," straightway prepared a dinner, invited his guests, and instructed his servant to let fall the roast mutton. The servant did so, and as the guests turned the host exclaimed, "Only a *lapsus lingue*, ha! ha! h—;" and then he paused, wondering why nobody else laughed.

From such temptations he will be relieved who consults not his own glorification but the happiness of the company. He will be prompted only to such stories as naturally suggest themselves, and as are fitted to promote the discussion or the pleasant feeling of the moment.

#### **Adaptation to the Time and the Company.**

—He will be especially wary of giving offence. However humorous and apt may be the story, he will withhold it if it seem likely to wound the feelings or to shock the sensitiveness of anyone present. Not only will he scrupulously avoid any approach to irreverence or indelicacy (see page 29), but he will bear in mind the peculiar history and prejudices of those present (see page 18).

#### **Stories Should Not be Allowed to Weary.**—

Stories are usually pungent in proportion as they are condensed. Sir William Temple says that there used to be at the inns of Scotland tale-tellers, whose business it was to lull restless travellers to sleep with stories of giants and dwarfs. One should have enough oratorical power to perceive whether he is retaining the sympathy of his audience. If their attention is roused by his beginning, and if he perceives no signs that the story is an old one to his hearers, he may elaborate and dwell upon details till he has made the scene as vivid as life, and holds his listeners trembling with eagerness for the climax.

It is not because stories are long that they weary. John B. Gough will spend ten minutes upon an anecdote which the morning newspaper told in five lines. Once sure that it is appropriate, and that the point will penetrate, he will give his imagination rein and surround the incident with a wealth of details. But he will be sure that every one of these details shall deepen the interest of the audience and heighten the climax.

When one's story is coldly received, or when the interest first wakened begins to wane, one should hasten to conclude it, and if it falls flat should neither repeat nor explain. If interrupted in the midst of the narration by some accident or rudeness, one should not return to one's story unless invited to do so. We must never forget that a story should be told, not for our sake, but for that of the company, and that the company is the best judge whether it wants to listen.

**Stories Should be Artistically Told.**—Most failures in story-telling result from lack of preparation. One forgets or altogether misses the point. He remembers that he laughed over something he once heard told, and he tries to repeat it without a clear notion of where the laugh came in. Perhaps the fun lay in the circumstances under which the story was told, which cannot be reproduced; or in the peculiar manner of the speaker, which cannot be imitated; or in the hilariousness of the moment, which is now wanting.

But oftenest the fault is in failure to recover the art with which the story was told—the quiet introduction, the unobtrusive but skilful arrangement of details, everything being omitted that did not bear on the conclusion, and every incident so introduced as to accumulate interest till the climax was sprung upon the hearers just as their attention was stretched to the utmost.

An artistic bit of story-telling is Sydney Smith's reference to Mrs. Partington in a speech on the "Reform Bill," delivered at Taunton :

"I do not mean to be disrespectful, but the attempt of the lords to stop the progress of reform reminds me very forcibly of the great storm of Sidmouth, and of the conduct of the excellent Mrs. Partington on that occasion. In the winter of 1824 there set in a great flood upon that town—the tide rose to an incredible height, the waves rushed in upon the houses, and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused. Mrs. Partington's spirit was up ; but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic Ocean beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or a puddle, but she should not have meddled with a tempest. Gentlemen, be at your ease, be quiet and steady. You will beat Mrs. Partington."

Contrast with this the following :

Mark Twain, writing upon Franklin, says : "He was twins, having been born simultaneously in two houses in Boston." There is an unconscious organic assumption that both houses, since people insist upon both, must have been the spots of his birth. If so the births in the two houses must have been simultaneous, but the two Franklins not identical. Of course, then, they must have been twins. . . . But I am reminded of a famous wit who, after viewing the Siamese twins for awhile, quietly remarked, "Brothers, I suppose."—*Weiss's Wit, Humor, and Shakspeare.*

Mark that in the first half of this paragraph Mr. Weiss, by endeavoring to explain the humor, lets it entirely escape. It is the precise point of the joke that the two Franklins *are* identical, and that *he* (not they) was twins. And in the second half the story is spoiled by making a *wit* say that the Siamese twins were probably brothers. That particular kind of remark is funny only when it is a blunder—a bull, as it is usually called. The zest of the incongruity is lost when the speaker himself perceives it and bases his remark upon it. How much funnier is the story of the learned professor who made the Siamese twins the occasion of a lecture to his students upon the beneficence of Providence. "Here they are," he said, "attached indissolubly to each other, obliged to share

each with the other every joy, every sorrow, every act of life. How kind the dispensation, then, that makes them brothers. Suppose they had been born strangers to each other, how intolerable would such an intimacy have become."

**Accuracy in Details.**—Whether the story be of what we have seen or of what we have heard, much of its effect depends upon the accuracy with which it is told.

Nothing can be ruder or more indicative of a small mind than to interrupt a story-teller with a correction of some misstatement that has no bearing upon the point at issue; yet the fact that such interruptions are common shows how instinctively the mind watches for these errors. Consequently the habit should be formed of omitting what one is not sure of. If you know an anecdote is Tom Hood's it may make it more interesting to say so; but if you are not sure, yet say so, perhaps half your hearers will remember that it is Charles Lamb's, and will be more intent on assuring themselves that you have made a mistake than upon observing the pertinence of the story.

On the other hand, if you begin:

"That reminds me of a story of Tom Hood's—or, it may be, of Charles Lamb's, or possibly of Douglas Jerrold's—though I don't think it sounds much like him, because he was always so biting—suckled on a lemon, somebody said—but then one forgets which man said these things, and after all it doesn't matter much; at any rate it is very good, and I think it was Tom Hood's," etc., not Mrs. Nickleby herself could more effectually make herself wearisome.

Moreover, these details are often the charm of the story. Few are so accustomed to analyze their impressions as to be sure just which are the elements of incongruity that make a situation amusing; but those who observe minutely and recall frequently the peculiarities of the occasion will impart a vividness to the narrative not otherwise attainable.

Few stories are well told the first time, because it is only

after an unsatisfactory telling that one begins to realize that like any other work of art a story deserves delicate workmanship. Effectiveness is often sought by means of exaggeration, but this is easily detected. The artist adheres precisely to the facts, but shows his skill in omitting none that are essential to the effect, and in admitting no others.

Mimicry is usually to be shunned. It is seldom agreeable except when instinctive—when the imagination recalls the scene so vividly that the speaker unconsciously adopts what is distinctive in the manner of the person represented. Much of what is meant for mimicry is simply buffoonery, unworthy of the monkey that accompanies a hand-organ.

**Simplicity of Narration.**—Much of the effect of story-telling depends upon the simplicity of it. There should be no such preamble as, "Well, the best thing I ever heard was——," or, "If you want to laugh just listen to this——." The less expectation is raised at the beginning the reader will be the appreciation at the end. Even when introducing another's story we should beware of embarrassing him by promising too much for him.

In like manner one should avoid preliminary chuckling. While it would be cruel, as Charles Lamb says, to deprive the story-teller of any participation in the merriment he excites, he should be sure the merriment has been excited before he participates in it, or he may find that his laugh is a solo. If, however, he has told his story well, and held the interest of his audience, when the climax comes he may sometimes lead the laugh that follows, though often the effect is heightened if he can maintain an unmoved gravity.

There is a look by which a man shows when he is going to say a good thing, and a look when he has said it.—EMERSON.

The difficulty is that such looks, by showing that the speaker has pronounced judgment on his remark, deprive us of the privilege of passing judgment, our rightful prerogative as listeners. This we are apt to resent, and to withhold or give reluctantly the applause really deserved by the remark itself.

**Cautions.**—No dishonest artifices should be employed, like inserting new names into old stories and passing them off as personal experience. If the anecdote be an old one say so, but do not submit to the humiliation of pretending yourself to have seen what you have only heard or read about.

Above all things never retell a story just offered, no matter how much better you can do it; nor let it be seen by your manner that you have heard it before, however familiar. Nor should one strive to eclipse a story just told by another of like import, but should supplement it only when one has at hand another that will heighten the effect of that just told.

How far one may be personal and touch on private matters in public is a question of great delicacy, and must be left to individual judgment. When happily done, it produces the very highest effect. With an illustration, we leave the reader to draw his own inferences.

I was at a Lotus Club dinner recently and a pretty well-known journalist, being called on for "a speech! a speech!" after the uproarious habit of that intellectual circus, rose and told a story. "It might be called," said he, with a sly look at the head of the table, where sat in presidential majesty a rather corpulent, slightly bald, middle-aged man, "it might be called 'How I got into a magazine,'" Then he changed to the other foot, blushed slightly, leaned on his fork, and said:

"I had an article once which I thought would make six pages in a magazine—if it got a chance. I concluded to give the Atlantic Monthly the benefit of it, because that was a superb creation of the human intellect and ought to be encouraged. [Smiles and raps on the table.] I sent it to that periodical, saying that it was my maiden effort, and asking the editor to send me the \$100 by draft or money order. In three weeks it came back, to my utter amazement, with the printed notice that it was excellent, but not adapted, etc. I saw that the editor of the Atlantic was a fool. [Cheers around the table and cries of satirical approval.] I sent it to another well-known magazine, offering it for \$50. It came back in two months, just when I was looking for it to appear. That

magazine, too, was evidently a failure! I then sent it (price \$15) to a first-class weekly, that printed just such things as my sketch, 'Mary Wanley's Guide,' but not half as well written. [Cheers and encouraging remarks.] Again it was sent back. [Laughter.] I could not understand it. I could not believe that our periodical literature was decaying so fast. I offered it to another journalist for nothing, telling him that I was a beginner, that this was the first effort of the sort I had ever offered to anybody, and I watched his face as he examined it suspiciously, and finally returned it to me, saying that the style was faulty; the idea was good, though it might have been used heretofore; but with study and careful practice I would make, perhaps, in time, etc. [Laughter.]

"I was mad, gentlemen!" said the speaker amid the roars of the company, and leaning on the chair with his other hand, he went on: "Something heroic must be done! Two years had passed. It was now 1871. I resolved to storm the citadel. I borrowed my brother's seal-skin overcoat, so as to look as imposing as possible, and struck for an illustrated magazine I had not tried; one of the finest works of art in the world. The doorkeeper stood briskly aside as I went in and asked for the editor, whose name I did not then know. I was speedily ushered into the presence of a young man who asked me to be seated, and inquired my business. 'To see the editor.' He would examine my manuscript. 'Very well,' I said, still standing. 'I must have an answer in fifteen minutes, as I leave on the next train for Boston.' He parleyed, but I was severe and taciturn, and reached for the manuscript which he had taken. 'I will see Mr. ——,' said he, naming the editor himself. The latter appeared. 'We will send this to you by mail,' said he, 'if it is not used.' 'I can leave it with you only fifteen minutes,' I replied. He looked surprised and glanced at the title. 'You can surely leave it one night,' he expostulated. 'No,' I rejoined resolutely, 'I have other uses for it.' In that I suppose he scented the opposition house, for he took off his overcoat (he was just going home) and said: 'I will look it over now.' [Cheers around the table.]

"He was a fine-looking man as he sat there in the dying twilight—[Cries of 'Oh!' 'Ah!']—a rather corpulent, slightly-bald, middle-aged man (at this the company turned toward the presiding officer, who was as red as a boiled lobster, and then they roared with glee, and he looked up in about ten minutes, and said: 'I will take this —: Mr. Oliver, please make out a check for \$50.' 'What?' I asked, '\$50? my price is \$125.' 'Ah!' said he, passing the manuscript to me, 'it is more than we ever pay anybody, except famous writers.' I delivered a stately bow, took the roll of paper, and turned out of the door. 'Well!' said he, calling to me, 'we'll take it at \$125;' and Mr. Oliver made out my check. [Cheers and roars of laughter. The man at the head of the table had turned a sort of indigo blue.]

"The worst of it is, or the best of it," said the narrator, "that I have not seen or heard of that sketch during all these seven years!"

The Lotus Club hall rang with cheers and laughter, for his manner of telling the story was indescribably droll, and then all parties turned toward the presiding officer, who was recognized as the hero of the narrative.

He rose slowly to his feet; the blue went out of his face, and even the scarlet turned to the rosy flush which is habitual to it, and he smiled cheerfully by the time the cheers and guffaws which greeted him had died away.

"The fact is," he began deprecatingly, and then there was another great roar of laughter. "Yes; I well remember the circumstances. I accepted the sketch to keep its writer from inflicting it on some weaker magazine. [Loud laughter.] Our house is rich. I can afford to stand in the breach. If it were not for the work we do in burying articles capable of injury, the mortality among magazines would be incalculable. [Laughter and cheers.] Yes, gentlemen, when a person with a flighty temperament



comes in [laughter] we exert every nerve to get possession of his manuscript to prevent the desolation that might otherwise ensue. [Cheers and jingling of glasses.] Such an article might fall into the hands of men who would inadvertently print it. [Cheers and cries of 'Hear! hear!'] We lock it up in a strong safe."

The company, led by the journalist, who blushed again at his awkward position, then drank to the sagacious magazine, while the editor went on seriously to say that he had eight immense fire-proof safes full of stories and other manuscripts that had been bought and paid for, some of the matter extending back many years. "If nobody should write a word for the body of our magazine for the next ten years," he said, "it would appear regularly every month, and I doubt if its quality would be at all impaired."—*N. Y. Letter to the Inter-Ocean.*

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Personal and private allusions, pp. 88-90.

### SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Are the rules for newspaper writing (pages 192 to 193) applicable to story-telling? What improvement can you suggest in the manner of telling any of the stories in this or the preceding chapter? Which of the following stories is the best told? What improvement can you suggest in any of them? What changes would you make in telling instead of reading them?

### PERSEVERANCE.

King Robert Bruce, the restorer of the Scottish monarchy, while reconnoitering the army, lay down in a barn. In the morning, still reclining on his couch of straw, he saw a spider climbing up one of the rafters. The insect fell, but immediately made a second attempt to ascend; and with regret the hero saw the spider fall a second time. It made a third unsuccessful attempt, and with much interest and concern the monarch saw the spider baffled in its aim twelve times. But the thirteenth attempt was successful, and the king, starting up, exclaimed, "This insignificant spider has taught me patience, and I will follow its example. Have I not been twelve times defeated by the enemy's superior force? On one more fight hangs the independence of my country." In a few

days his anticipations were realized by his glorious victory at the battle of Bannockburn.

#### A BOY'S AMBITION.

A few days ago Justice of the Peace John Weber took his little son down to Toledo on an excursion. The lad interviewed the man at the wheel and gathered much information relative to the business of steam-boating. Presently his father joined him on the hurricane deck and asked him how he was enjoying himself. "First-rate," was the enthusiastic reply, "I'm goin' to be a steamboat man, papa." "All right," responded the "judge," "but you'll have to study navigation, astronomy, and divers other sciences, in order to become a good one." The lad said nothing at the time, but appeared to be revolving the difficulties of the case in his mind. Perhaps half an hour later, he remarked with much gravity, "Papa, I guess I won't be a steamboat man. I'd rather be a justice of the peace; you don't have to know anything for that."—*Detroit Free Press.*

PROFESSOR (to student)—"You wish me to give you a recommendation? I don't remember ever having seen you at any of my lectures." Student—"Ah, professor, you evidently confound me with another man who looks very much like me, and who, it is true, has never attended your lectures." Professor—"Yes, yes, very likely." (Gives him the recommendation.)

#### PEDANTIC CRITICISM.

"And how did Garrick speak the soliloquy, last night?" "Oh! against all rule, my lord; most ungrammatically! betwixt the substantive and the adjective, which should agree together in number, case, and gender, he made a breach thus—stopping as if the point wanted settling; and betwixt the nominative case, which your lordship knows should govern the verb, he suspended his voice in the epilogue a dozen times, three seconds and three-fifths, by a stop-watch, my lord, each time." "Admirable grammarian! but in suspending his voice, was the sense suspended likewise? did no expression of attitude or countenance fill up the chasm? was the eye silent? did you narrowly look?" "I looked only at the stop-watch, my lord." "Excellent observer!"—**STERNE.**

#### OVERREACHED.

A wealthy man died suddenly without leaving any will. The widow, desirous of securing the whole of the property, concealed her husband's death, and persuaded a poor shoemaker to take his place. Accordingly he was closely muffled in bed, as if he was very sick, and a lawyer was called in to write the will. The shoemaker in a feeble voice bequeathed half of the property to the widow. "What shall be done with the remainder," asked the lawyer. "The remainder," replied he, "I give and bequeath to the poor little shoemaker across the street, who has been a good neighbor and a deserving man."

## CHAPTER VII.

### AS TO BEING FUNNY.

The music that can deepest reach,  
And cure all ill, is cordial speech ;  
Mark thy wisdom with delight,  
Toy with the bow, yet hit the white.  
Of all wit's uses, the main one  
Is to live well with who has none.—EMERSON.

**Need of Relaxation.**—Reproached for frolicking with his children, Æsop pointed to an unbent bow, and asked how long it would be an effective weapon if kept constantly strung. Disraeli tells of the Jesuits that they had a standing rule that after two hours' study the mind should take some relaxation, however trifling. Petavius used to twirl his chair for five minutes, Richelieu jumped with his servant to try which could reach the higher point on the wall, and Samuel Clarke used to leap over chairs and tables.

A young prelate was sent with a message to the stern Cardinal Mazarin. By a blunder of a servant he was admitted to the august presence unannounced, and to his consternation he surprised the great man amusing himself by jumping over articles of furniture. For a moment the embarrassment was mutual, but the young courtier soon recovered himself. "I will bet your eminence two gold pieces that I can beat that jump," he exclaimed, pulling off his shoes as if eager for the sport. The Cardinal accepted the challenge, and the two contested like school-boys. The young man lost his wager, but won the lasting favor of the haughtiest dignitary in Europe.

But the relaxation most universal among men is the contemplation of the ludicrous.

There is no more interesting spectacle than to see the effects of wit upon the different characters of men; than to observe it expanding caution, relaxing dignity, unfreezing coldness, teaching age, and care, and pain to smile, extorting reluctant gleams of pleasure from melancholy, and charming even the pangs of grief. It is pleasant to observe how it penetrates through the coldness and awkwardness of society, gradually bringing men nearer together, and like the combined force of wine and oil, giving every man a glad heart and a shining countenance. Genuine and innocent wit like this is surely the flavor of the mind. Man could direct his ways by plain reason, and support his life by tasteless food; but God has given us wit, and flavor, and brightness, and laughter, and perfumes, to enliven the days of man's pilgrimage, and to charm his pained steps over the burning marl.—**SYDNEY SMITH.**

#### THEORIES OF THE LUDICROUS.

**Hobbes.**—The lowest, narrowest view of the laughable is presented by Hobbes, and is characteristic of all his philosophy. He says:

Laughter is a sudden glory arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves by comparison with the inferiority of others or our own former infirmity.

The insufficiency of this explanation is well pointed out by Campbell, who remarks:

If you make but a trifling alteration of the expression, so as to destroy the wit (which often turns on a very little circumstance), without altering the real import of the sentence (a thing not only possible but easy), you will produce the same opinion and the same contempt, and consequently will give the same subject of triumph, yet without the least tendency to laugh.

**Haven.**—Even Dr. Haven, who points out that it cannot be simply the conception of inferiority in others which causes laughter, since if it were so the proud, self-conceited, and supercilious would abound in that genuine and hearty

merriment which in fact they never experience, himself accepts what Hobbes considers the essence of the ludicrous as at least an invariable accompaniment. Thus :

The person laughing is always, for the time being, superior, in his own estimation, at least, to the person or thing laughed at. It is some awkwardness, some blunder, some defect of body, mind, or manner, some lack of sharpness or of sense, some perceived incongruity between the true character or position of the individual and his present circumstances, that excites our laughter and constitutes the ludicrous.

**Hazlitt** goes further :

The ludicrous is when there is a contradiction between the object and our expectations, heightened by some deformity or inconvenience, that is, by being contrary to what is customary or desirable ; as the ridiculous, which is the highest degree of the laughable, is that which is contrary not only to custom, but to sense and reason.

**Bain** quotes from **Quintilian** :

A saying that causes laughter is generally based on false reasoning, has always something low in it, is often purposely sunk into buffoonery, *is never honorable to the subject of it.*

**Sir Philip Sidney** argues that laughter is not wholly agreeable :

Delight we scarcely do but in things that have a conveniency to ourselves or to the general nature. Laughter almost ever cometh of things most disproportioned to ourselves and nature. Delight hath a joy in it, either permanent or present ; laughter hath only a scornful tickling.

**Laughter Not Necessarily Scornful.**—This last phrase at once embodies and refutes this class of theories. We know that our merriest laughter is not scornful, and that any theory that so represents it must be erroneous.

For instance, good Deacon Robinson, heading a procession of Sunday-school scholars as they march through the aisles of a crowded church, strikes up, "Hold the Fort," forgetful that the second stanza will begin :

"See the mighty hoets advancing, Satan leading on."

When that line is reached everybody smiles. But the smile is directed, not at the deacon, but at the incongruity ; and in proportion to the incongruity will be the feeling of amusement, so that the louder the laughter the more emphatic will be the testimony that the deacon's life is exemplary. There is no sudden conception of inferiority in the deacon, as Hobbes would have it. The audience is not rendered superior to him, even in its own estimation, as Haven would make us believe. The laughter is not the "scornful tickling" of Sir Philip Sidney, but a burst of merriment, in which the deacon himself is probably the heartiest to join. When the good brother, in a prayer-meeting, attempted, in the absence of the chorister, to start the hymn,

"I love to steal a while away,"

and after beginning several times, "I love to steal ——," "I love to steal ——," "I love to steal ——," found it impossible to carry on the tune, and broke down, it was very much to his credit if his fellow-worshippers were simply amused ; for there have been men from whom that unpremeditated avowal would produce an awkward silence.

When a bereaved widower, answering a condoling friend who asks if the recent death was not sudden, replies doubtfully, "Well, yes, rather, for her ;" when a bashful wedding-guest wishes the bride many happy returns ; when a college professor, asked for leave of absence to attend the funeral of a second cousin, tells the student he supposes he shall have to let him go, but that he really

wishes it were a nearer relative; when typographical errors give us a list of awards at the Paris Exposition, issued "by order of his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales;" report that a cow upon the railway track was literally cut into calves, and transform a familiar sentence in the Prayer-Book from "We shall all be changed in the twinkling of an eye" into "We shall all be hanged in the twinkling of an eye,"—in all these and thousands of similar instances there is in our laughter no ingredient of contempt. We simply perceive an incongruity that provokes our merriment, and that merriment is thoroughly good-natured. Those who see in such instances a disparagement of the individual, fail to distinguish between the absurd in conception and the absurd in reality.

Does the pupil who in the expression, "Mrs. Caudle's husband," parses Mrs. Caudle's "as a proper feminine noun, third, singular, possessive, and governed by husband," suppose that Mrs. Caudle herself was governed by her husband? Not if he has been taught to distinguish between a grammatical relation of two words and a real relation of the two objects that the words represent. No more should he fail to see that it is one thing to laugh at the absurdity of associating a ridiculous idea with an individual and quite another to laugh at the individual as himself ridiculous.

The keenest thrusts are those of the tongue. The bitterest enmity may wreak itself in a jest. But sarcasm, irony, contempt, are not essential to the ludicrous. The truly funny is impersonal. "To resolve laughter into an expression of contempt," says Coleridge, "is contrary to fact, and laughable enough." A later writer tells us:

That a gratified sense of superiority is at the root of barbarous laughter may be at least half the truth. But there is a loving laughter in which the only recognized superiority is that of the ideal self, the God within, holding the mirror and the scourge for our own pettiness, as well as our neighbor's.

We may go further than this. Much that is ludicrous is sheer nonsense. De Quincey tells us how Charles Lamb

used to visit him, and join with him in laughter over the silliest conceits. Leigh Hunt says :

“The difference between nonsense not worth talking and nonsense worth it is simply this: the former is a result of want of ideas; the latter of a superabundance of them.”

He adds that nonsense, in the good sense of the word, is a very sensible thing in its season, and is confounded with the other only by people of a shallow gravity who cannot afford to joke. “These gentlemen, he says, live upon credit, and would not have it inquired into. They are grave, not because they see or feel the contrast of mirth, for then they would feel the mirth itself; but because gravity is their safest mode of behavior. They must keep their minds sitting still, because they are incapable of a motion that is not awkward. They are waxen images among the living, the deception is undone if they stir; or hollow vessels covered up, which may be taken for full ones; the collision of wit jars against them, and strikes out against their hollowness.”

Nonsense talked by men of wit and understanding in the hour of relaxation is of the very finest essence of conviviality, and a treat delicious to those who have the sense to comprehend it; but it implies a trust in the company not always to be risked.—DISRAELI.

**Herbert Spencer.**—A wholly different account of laughter is given by Mr. Spencer. He starts with the assumption that a given amount of feeling must somewhere generate an equivalent manifestation of force, and that if of the channels the force would naturally take, one or more are closed, more must be taken by the other channels. He goes on to show that the muscular action of laughter has this peculiarity, that it is purposeless. The contractions of the muscles are quasi-convulsive, and result simply from an uncontrollable discharge of energy that takes the most familiar paths, first through the organs of speech, producing a smile; and, if that proves insuffi-



cient, through the organs of respiration, producing laughter.

Now, why is our nervous energy prompted to escape through these paths upon certain perceptions of incongruity?

"It is an insufficient explanation that in these cases laughter is a result from the pleasure we take in escaping from the restraint of grave feelings. That this is a part cause is true. Doubtless very often, as Mr. Bain says, 'it is the coerced form of seriousness without the reality that gives us that stiff position from which a contact with triviality or vulgarity relieves us to our uproarious delight.' And in so far as mirth is caused by the gush of agreeable feeling that follows the cessation of mental strain it further illustrates the general principle above set forth.

"But no explanation is thus afforded of the mirth which ensues when the short silence between the *andante* and *allegro* of one of Beethoven's symphonies is broken by a loud sneeze. In this and hosts of like cases the mental tension is not coerced, but spontaneous—not disagreeable, but agreeable; and the coming impressions to which the attention is directed promise a gratification which few if any desire to escape. Hence, when the unlucky sneeze occurs, it cannot be that the laughter of the audience is due simply to the release from an irksome attitude of mind; some other cause must be sought.

"This cause we shall arrive at by carrying our analysis a step farther. We have but to consider the quantity of feeling that exists under such circumstances, and then to ask what are the conditions that determine its discharge, to at once reach a solution.

"Take a case. You are sitting in a theatre absorbed in the progress of an interesting drama. Some climax has been reached which arouses your sympathies—say a reconciliation between the hero and heroine after a long and painful misunderstanding. The feelings excited by this scene are not of a kind from which you seek relief, but are, on the contrary, a relief from the painful feelings with which you have witnessed the previous estrangement. Moreover, the sentiments these fictitious personages have for the moment inspired you with are not such as would lead you to rejoice in any indignity offered to them, but rather such as would make you resent the indignity.

"And now, while you are contemplating the reconciliation with a pleasurable sympathy there appears from behind the scenes a tame kid, which, having stared at the audience, walks up to the lovers and sniffs at them. You cannot help joining in the roar which greets this *contre-temps*. Inexplicable as is this irresistible burst on the hypothesis of a pleasure from relative increase of self-importance when witnessing the humiliation of others, it is readily explicable if we consider what in such a case must become of the feeling that existed at the time the incongruity arose.

"A large mass of emotion had been produced, or, to speak in physiological language, a large portion of the nervous system was in a state of tension. There was also great expectation with regard to the further evolution of the scene—a quantity of vague, nascent thought and emotion, into which the existing quantity of thought and emotion was about to pass.

"Had there been no interruption, the body of new ideas and feelings next excited would have sufficed to absorb the whole of the liberated nervous energy. But now this large amount of nervous energy, instead of being allowed to expend itself in producing an equivalent amount of the new thoughts and emotions, is suddenly checked in its flow. The channels along which the discharge was about to take place are suddenly closed. The new channel opened—that afforded by the appearance and proceedings of the kid—is a small one; the ideas and feelings suggested are not numerous and massive enough to

carry off the nervous energy to be expended. The excess must therefore discharge itself in some other directions; and in the way already explained there results an efflux through motor nerves to various classes of muscles, producing the half-convulsive motions we call laughter."

Mr. Darwin quotes this explanation, and thus corroborates it :

"An observation bearing on this point was made by a correspondent during the recent siege of Paris, namely, that the German soldiers, after strong excitement from exposure to extreme danger, were particularly apt to burst into loud laughter at the smallest joke. So again when young children are just beginning to cry an unexpected event will sometimes suddenly turn their crying into laughter, which apparently serves equally well to expend their surplus energy."

**The difficulty** with Mr. Spencer's theory is that it accounts for everything except just what it purports to explain. What we call laughter is not the half-convulsive motions. These are but the expression of laughter. To draw out the muscles of the face into a forced smile is tiresome, and becomes painful if continued.

Still more tiresome and painful is the muscular motion of a hearty laugh. Says Mr. Darwin :

During excessive laughter the whole body is thrown backward and shakes, or is almost convulsed; the respiration is much disturbed, the head and face become gorged with blood with the veins distended, and the orbicular muscles are spasmodically contracted in order to protect the eyes. Hence, as formerly remarked, it is scarcely possible to point out any difference between the tear-stained face of a person after a paroxysm of excessive laughter and after a crying fit. It is probably due to the close similarity of the spasmodic movements caused by these widely different emotions that hysteric persons alternately laugh and cry with violence, and that young children pass suddenly from one to the other state.

Another scientist says :

No doubt the sound of laughter is one of the very earliest and oddest of human cries. It is certainly an astonishing sound, and one that is very difficult to listen to and analyze without prejudice, and a remote feeling of sympathy. The best way to study it that I know is to seize on opportunities when one is being constantly in-

errupted in reading a serious book by shouts of laughter from a party of strangers ; one can then note the curious variety of spasmodic sounds produced, and marvel that men in the midst of rational conversation should be compelled by necessity to break off suddenly their use of language and find relief and enjoyment in the utterance of perfectly inarticulate and animal howls like those of the Long-armed Gibbon.

We all know what it is to laugh till we ache ; till we are compelled to beg our companion to desist from his funny stories, and forcibly to wrest our mind from a contemplation it too keenly enjoys, lest we laugh ourselves to death.

The phrase is not extravagant. People do laugh themselves to death. On December 13, 1878, Joshua Walker, a respectable colored man living in the city of Providence, undertook to make some brine for pickling pork, and went to the cupboard for salt. He mistook the article, and his wife Rosa, twenty years old and recently happily married, found him salting the pork with granulated sugar. She burst into a hearty laugh ; she laughed, and laughed, and kept on laughing. Her husband became alarmed and ran for assistance, but in vain. The woman literally laughed herself to death. Such instances are not frequent, but a year's file of any New York daily will report at least one or two. Many people are in greater danger of laughing themselves to death than of being struck by lightning.

If Mr. Spencer's theory of laughter were adequate, therefore, laughter would be a painful experience, to be avoided, like a severe cold or the fever and ague. But, as we have seen, he describes everything but the laughter. He tells us what are the motions that accompany laughter, and why we laugh with certain muscles, instead of swinging our arms or turning a somersault. But in what the amusement of laughter consists, and why we so enjoy it that in this amusement we forget the discomfort of the accompanying motions, he wholly ignores.

**Aristotle.**—From these and many other theories we go back to the definition made by Aristotle, which Coleridge declares "as good as can be." A definition which twenty-two centuries cannot improve is worth attention.

"*The ludicrous arises,*" says Aristotle, "*from surprise at perceiving something out of its usual place when the unusualness is not accompanied by a sense of danger.*" Such surprise is always pleasurable; and it is observed that surprise accompanied by a sense of danger becomes tragic.

Here, then, are the two elements of the ludicrous—the incongruous and the inconvenient. Between the two is a poise, and the balance differs with every mind. What annoys one amuses another. Even to the same mind annoyances may be repeated till they become amusing, and one rather hopes they will accumulate in order to complete the joke. Sam Weller and Mark Tapley were too absorbed in the incongruous to be disturbed by the inconvenient.

A boy was cuffed, and slapped, and shaken, and pounded for snow-balling an irascible old farmer. The boy laughed. The farmer cuffed and slapped and shook and pounded harder. The boy laughed louder. Finally the farmer became exhausted, and exclaimed :

"Boy, what are you laughing at?"

"Why, at the joke on you : I ain't the boy!"

The same difference is observed in the effect on us of the experience of others. For instance, a man in Fulton laid his finger on the table in front of a buzz-saw to feel the motion of the air. In the rapid revolution of the saw he did not perceive how far the teeth extended, and his finger was instantly cut off. Even his pain was lost in astonishment, and the foreman approached to ask how it happened.

"Why, I just laid my finger down so," he explained; and whiz went the saw through a second finger.

Now, that story will be funny or tragic according to the physical sympathy of the person who hears it. It appeared in the funny columns of the newspapers; but it was read by many who have a Donatello's shrinking from the sight or even the thought of physical suffering, in whom the recital of the story made the flesh creep.

*Nothing is more to be remembered in conversation than that the ludicrous is not an absolute relation, but depends entirely upon the mind of the person perceiving the incongruity.* The merry jokes of the dissecting-room would cost many a man his dinner and many a woman her consciousness. Hence the would-be wit is often a terror to society. Where he sees only the incongruous he forces upon his hearers the vulgar, the disgusting, the terrible.

Wit generally succeeds more from being happily addressed than from its native poignancy. A jest calculated to spread at a gaming table may be received with perfect indifference should it happen to drop into a mackerel-boat.—GOLDSMITH.

Those who have seen the play of "Jane Shore" will remember what a huge joke it seemed to her keepers to hurl the poor frozen, starving creature upon her feet again, and drive her on into the pitiless storm. Well is it for any of us if we have never laughed at the misery of others because we lacked the sympathy to perceive it.

A lady attired in profound crape entered a car and abandoned herself to melancholy. A woman behind her, with red nose, blue veil and green spectacles, leaned forward and inquired :

"Lost somebody?"

A barely perceptible nod answered the question without inviting another, but the inquisition proceeded.

"Father?"

A shake.

"Brother?"

A shake.

"Husband?"

A nod.

"Church member?"

A nod.

"Life insured?"

A nod.

"Then what are you moping about? He's all right, and so are you."

**Sacred Subjects** are never to be trifled with. Nor will the gentleman restrict this reserve to those subjects that are sacred to himself. To find matter for jesting in any sincere feeling, whether of religion or of affection or of principle, betokens a selfish heart and a shallow intellect.

Mr. Weiss, in his "Wit, Humor, and Shakspeare," frequently blunders here. The following paragraph has almost every literary fault:

Perhaps the purest instance of thoroughly French wit is to be credited to Mr. Emerson. An amiable rustic once heard him lecture, but could make nothing of it. Turning to a friend, he said: "Darn it! I'd like to know what Emerson thinks about God. I bet I'll ask him." He did, when Mr. Emerson came down the aisle. "God," replied he, "is the  $x$  of algebra,"—that is, the unknown quantity in every problem. Nothing could be more admirable.—P. 25.

The sense of the humorous is as incompatible with tenderness and respect as with compassion. No man would laugh to see a little child fall; and he would be shocked to see such an accident happen to an old woman, or to his father. It is a beautiful thing to observe the boundaries which nature has affixed to the ridiculous, and to notice how soon it is swallowed up by the more illustrious feelings of our minds. Where is the heart so hard that could bear to see the awkward resources and contrivances of the poor turned into ridicule? Who could laugh at the fractured, ruined body of a soldier? Who is so wicked as to amuse himself with the infirmities of extreme old age? or to find subject for humor in the weakness of a perishing, dissolving body? Who is there that does not feel himself disposed to overlook the little peculiarities of the truly great and wise, and to throw a veil over that ridicule which they have redeemed by the magnitude of their talents and the splendor of their virtues? Who ever thinks of turning into

ridicule our great and ardent hope of a world to come? Whenever the man of humor meddles with these things he is astonished to find that in all the great feelings of their nature the mass of mankind always think and act aright; that they are ready enough to laugh, but that they are quite as ready to drive away with indignation and contempt the light fool who comes with the feather of wit to crumble the bulwarks of truth and to beat down the Temples of God.—**SYDNEY SMITH.**

#### WHY THE LUDICROUS GIVES PLEASURE.

**The Theory of Pleasure.**—Among the vexed questions of philosophy none is more interesting than the theory of pleasure. Plato insisted that pleasure was simply a release from pain, and could exist only after the pain had caused annoyance. To say that the act which typifies his theory is scratching is to use a figure bold enough to be remembered, and a word which he himself frequently employed.

Opposed to this gloomy view of life is the theory propounded by Aristotle, which finds its ablest modern exponent in Sir William Hamilton. "Pleasure," he says, "is the reflex of the spontaneous and unimpeded exertion of a power of whose energy we are conscious; pain a reflex of the overstrained or repressed exertion of such a power." Elsewhere he says that "Pleasure is nothing but the concomitant or reflex of the unenforced and unimpeded energy of a faculty or habit, the degree of pleasure being always in proportion to the degree of such energy."

Leibnitz says that systems of philosophy are equally right in what they assert and wrong in what they deny. The theories of Kant and of Hamilton, diverse as they seem, yet agree in this—that pleasure comes from action. "Things won are done," says *Cresida*: "joy lies in the doing."

This is true even of the "pure pleasures" of Plato, which Hamilton ignores; "those from beautiful colors, and from figures, and

most of those from odors, and those from sounds, and any objects whose absence is unfelt and painless, while their presence is sensible and productive of pleasure ; " " which," to quote from Philebus, "are eternally and intrinsically beautiful and attended with pleasures of their own to which those of scratching have no resemblance."

Though there be justice in Stuart Mill's remark that Hamilton's definition of pleasure throws no new light upon it, and in the claim of Mr. Dallas that in "pure pleasure" the main source of enjoyment is less in the consciousness of energy than in the "conceit of special agreement in fitness:" even if we accept Mr. Dallas's theory of exceeding pleasure, "that as the joy of life waxes the consciousness of life wanes; that as consciousness rises pleasure sets; that we recognize the presence of our bliss only when the bliss begins to fade, and that the heaven of our existence begins when the consciousness of it passes away," the pleasure still results from activities, and the only question is as to how far these activities are within the sphere of consciousness.

**Perception of the Ludicrous.**—As the ludicrous arises from suddenly perceiving an incongruity, it is manifest that the pleasure arises from gratification at the possession and the exercise of this perception.

*Not Universal.*—The possession of a humorous perception is by no means universal, and its most remarkable property is, that it is inborn. "It requires a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding," says Sydney Smith. "It is not in the power of every one to taste humor, however he may wish it," says Laurence Sterne, "it is the gift of God."

We are all familiar with the helpless look of one who lacks perception of the ludicrous, and who peers into our faces to see whether or not what was said last is a joke he ought to laugh at.

Nothing annoys one more than to observe the utter want of perception of a joke in some minds. Miss Jackson called, the other day, and spoke of the oppressive heat of last week. "Heat, madam," I said, "it was so dreadful here that I found nothing



left for it but to take off my flesh and sit in my bones." "Take off your flesh and sit in your bones, sir? Oh, Mr. Smith, how could you do that?" "Nothing more easy, madam; come and see me next time." But she ordered her carriage, and evidently thought it a very unorthodox proceeding.—SIDNEY SMITH.

A college professor, lecturing on the effect of the wind in Western forests, remarked: "In travelling along the road I sometimes found the logs bound and twisted together to such an extent that a mule could not climb over them, so I went round."

"John," said a gentleman to his new servant, "did you take that note to Mr. Jones?"

"Yes, sir; but it didn't do him any good!"

"How do you know that?"

"Because he can't read."

"Mr. Jones can't read? Why, what do you mean, John?"

"Why, he's blind, blind as a bat. While I was in the room he asked me three times where was my hat, and there it was right on my head in plain sight all the time."

The works of many standard authors abound in passages where through lack of this perception grave issue is taken with statements, the only point of which is their humor. Thus, in a noted rhetoric:

But of all kinds the worst is that wherein the words, when construed, are capable of no meaning at all. Such an expression is the following: "There were seven ladies in the company, every one prettier than another," by which it is intended, I suppose, to indicate that they were all very pretty. One prettier implies that there is another less pretty, but where every one is prettier there can be none less, and consequently none more pretty. Such trash is the disgrace of our tongue.—CAMPBELL.

In a play of Douglas Jerrold an old sailor, attempting to snatch a kiss, gets a box on the ear. "Just my luck," he exclaims; "always wrecked on the coral reefs." When the manager heard the play read he could see no point to this remark, and insisted that it should be struck out.

*Not to be Acquired.*—Nor can a sense of the humorous be acquired. It must be felt, and instantly, or it vanishes. The moment you seek to fix it, to study it, to analyze it, the virtue has departed. Though you should resolve into its elements every funny thing that had ever happened

you might still be blind to the next that occurred, for the humorous is mercurial in its manifestations.

Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in a reasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale; sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense or the affinity of their sound; sometimes it is wrapped up in a dress of humorous expression; sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude; sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection; sometimes it is concealed in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense; sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture passeth for it; sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being; sometimes it riseth only upon a lucky hitting upon what is strange; sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose. Often it consisteth in one hardly knows what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how, being answerable to the numberless roving of fancy and windings of language.—BARROW.

*Value not Factitious.*—It is largely because this sense of humor is unattainable that its possession gives such pleasure. We value most what is hardest to get. But the value of a sense of humor is by no means factitious.

Mirth is as innate in the mind as any other original faculty. The absence of it, in individuals or in communities, is a defect; for there are various forms of imposture which wit, and wit alone, can expose and punish. Without a well-trained capacity to perceive the ludicrous, the health suffers, both of the body and the mind, seriousness dwindles into asceticism, sobriety degenerates into bigotry, and the natural order of things gives way to the vagaries of a distempered imagination.—WHIPPLE.

Instances of this kind are perhaps most common and most lamentable in those who have to do with sacred subjects. Ozanam, the mathematician, said it was for the Sorbonne to discuss, for the

Pope to decide, and for the mathematician to go to heaven in a perpendicular line. In one of the mysteries enacted in Germany, toward the end of the last century, the Creator of the world was represented as an old gentleman in a wig, who groped about in the dark, and after running his head against the posts exclaimed in utter peevishness, "Let there be light," and there was light—the light of a tallow candle.

So in a grave sermon, Francis Meres (the same to whom we are indebted for the earliest critical mention of Shakspeare) made out addition and multiplication to be God's arithmetic, because when he had made Adam and Eve he caused them to increase and multiply, but subtraction and division to be the devil's arithmetic, because the arch enemy subtracted Delilah from Samson and divided Michal from David. From absurdities like these the slightest sense of the ludicrous would protect a reverent mind.

"In every condition of man it is play, and play alone, that makes him complete," says Schiller. "Humor is the harmony of the heart," says Douglas Jerrold. "Even genius and philanthropy," to quote again from Whipple, "are incomplete without they are accompanied by some sense of the ludicrous, for an extreme sensitiveness to the evil and misery of society becomes a maddening torture if not modified by a feeling of the humorous, and urges its subjects into morbid exaggeration of life's dark side."

*Not to be Obtruded.*—It should be noted that those in whom the sense of humor is keenest often display it least. When a man explains his understanding of a joke his enjoyment of it is superficial. Such a one is so impatient to obtrude his appreciation of the funny that he never permits the funny fully to develop itself. The true humorist is never in a hurry. If you bungle in telling a story familiar to him he does not interrupt you, even to hint that he has heard it before, but lets you blunder on to the conclusion, finding it doubly ludicrous that you suppose he is laughing at the story, while in fact he is laughing at you.

A common incident is the first visit of the beardless boy to the barber's shop. In all these stories the barber parades his face-tiousness. For instance, he lathers his customer's face and then sits down to read the morning newspaper.

"What are you waiting for?" asks the boy; and the barber replies:

"Waiting for your beard to grow."

Now, the barber spoils the joke by obtruding his own smartness. The true humorist would lather and shave the smooth face as if it were a Leadville miner's; would inquire if the razor took hold well, and if all the beard should be removed or a small goatee left to sort of balance the moustache, like; and all so deftly and imperturbably that the boy would pay his bill with the air of a veteran, and swagger off like a drum-major.

In a recently published book of memoirs we are told that something in the appearance of Professor Buttmann, the profound Greek scholar, irresistibly impressed every one he met with the idea that he was a barber. Passing along the street one day he was hailed from an upper window by some one to him unknown, who beckoned to him to ascend; and when the wise man entered commanded curtly: "Cut my hair."

The professor meekly obeyed, and had about half concluded the operation when the victim, looking into the glass, discovered that one side of his head had been reduced to baldness, while the other looked as if it had been gnawed by an absent-minded mule.

"Merciful Heaven!" he yelled, "you don't know how to cut hair."

"You did not ask me whether I did or not; I am Professor Buttmann," and with a low bow the learned man departed. He was a true humorist.

*Enjoyed in Proportion to Difficulty.*—Like all our other powers, the faculty of appreciating the funny is enjoyed in proportion to the difficulties it encounters. There is most zest in the game of chess that we barely win, and that is to us the funniest joke which we barely see and our neighbors do not see at all.

One who has addressed different audiences knows how impossible it is to predict the reception a certain anecdote will receive. Told precisely alike in three different places, one audience will laugh till the tears come, another will sit stolid because it fails to see the point, and the third will sneer because it sees the point too easily.

It must be confessed that one must listen to many stories to find a point new enough to occasion the surprise which is the chief element of the ludicrous. Dr. Johnson projected a work "to show how small a quantity of real fiction there is in the world and that the same images, with very few variations, have served all authors who have ever written." Certainly a bare dozen would make up a majority of the paragraphs gleaned for in the funny columns of our newspapers. It would be worth the student's while to count the proportion which relate to the mother-in-law, to big feet, to doctors killing their patients, to the poor mule that won't work both ways, and to the servant-girl who kindled a fire with naphtha and nothing has benzine of her since.

*Conventional Jokes.*—Not only are a majority of jokes built on a few dummy ideas, but the ideas themselves are only conventionally funny, so that the laugh is not at the idea, but at some peculiarity in the expression.

For instance, the world has agreed to smile when it is suggested that a doctor kills his patients. As long ago as when Martial wrote this was an accepted joke, and one of his epigrams may be thus translated :

A doctor lately was a captain made ;  
It is a change of titles, not of trade.

Now the ways in which this assumption may be suggested are numberless.

A physician's wife looking out of the window sees her husband in a funeral procession. "I do wish he would not go to the grave," she complains, "it looks so like a tailor carrying home his work."

Two teams are travelling along a lonely road. One tries in vain to pass the other, and the driver calls out, "Say, man, what's your business?"

"I am a physician, sir," replies the other stiffly.

"All right, then, you ought to keep ahead; I carry coffins."

A practitioner finds a lady reading "Twelfth Night," and asks:  
"When Shakspeare wrote about Patience on a Monument did he mean doctors' patients?"

"No," is the reply; "you don't find doctors' patients on monuments, but under them."

The essence of the ludicrous is incongruity, and in the best jokes the incongruity lies in the ideas. But here the main incongruity lies in assuming that doctors, whose business it is to cure patients, really kill them. In this there is no longer any novelty, and therefore whatever is funny must come from the particular form of expression. The novelty of expression in anecdotes like these is largely based upon punning. The jokes are mere twistings of words, artificial, and at the best but dexterous.

But with the man deficient in humor they are favorites, because he can commit them to memory and remember to laugh at them whenever they are dressed up and trotted out. Especially grateful to such a mind is the joke that derives all its humor from frequent repetition. In the play of the "Mighty Dollar" the persistent misuse of capital letters is regarded as a "K. G."—capital joke—"by a large majority."

*American humor* is characterized by what may be termed the omission of the major premise.

The logicians resolve every judgment into a syllogism. Thus, if we conclude that a heavy fall of snow is a blessing because it provides poor people with work in shovelling off sidewalks, our entire thought is this: Major premise—Whatever provides poor people with work is a blessing. Minor premise—Such a snow provides poor people with work. Conclusion—Therefore such a snow is a blessing. Now, we do not usually stop to express the major premise, but go at once from the minor to the conclusion. A syllogism with one of the premises omitted is called an enthymeme, and the word is worth remembering because it describes it exactly to call the typical joke of the period an enthymeme.

"Will the boy who threw that red pepper on the stove come forward and get a nice book?" asked an Iowa Sunday-school su-

perintendent, with a bland smile. But the boy never stirred. He was a far-seeing boy.

Now there is a capital enthymeme. The major premise is that if the boy had come up he would have got walloped; but that is left to the imagination, being, in fact, implied in the pepper.

A Western coroner's jury brought in a verdict that the deceased came to his death from calling Bill Jones a liar.

A Sharon man stole a peck of dahlia-roots under the impression that they were sweet-potatoes. He felt the deception keenly.

A New Fairfield man who failed to get a thirty-cent pineapple for a quarter of a dollar wanted to know whether we were breathing the pure air of freedom or being strangled by the fetid fumes of a foreign despotism. The store-keeper said those were the only pine-apples he had.

A man from Maine, who had never paid more than twenty-five cents to see an entertainment, went to a New York theatre where the play was "The Forty Thieves," and was charged a dollar and a half for a ticket. Handing the pasteboard back, he remarked, "Keep it, mister; I don't want to see the other thirty-nine."

A Milford resident came to New Haven for a spree. He had it. In a drunken stupor he stumbled into the Fair Haven rolling-mill, where he awoke at night to see molten iron glaring, bright sparks flying, laborers gliding to and fro in the lurid flame, and horrible shadows. As he rubbed his eyes a workman asked him where he came from. He gasped: "When I was on earth I lived in New Milford."

In this sort of anecdotes it is assumed that the hearer's mind is bright and quick enough to supply the missing connection. The hearer is gratified by this confidence, and by his ability to justify it, and would resent your thinking it necessary even to hint, "This is a goak.—A. Ward."

While this omission of the connection adds to the pleasure of those able to supply it, unfortunately it produces confusion or blankness in the minds of those who are unable to do so.

The great success of Artemas Ward's career was his lecture on Utah, delivered in Egyptian Hall, London. After a prologue, in-

tended, as the programme stated, to show what a good education the lecturer had, Artemas went on to inform his audience that it was an error to call Salt Lake City the City of the Plain, as some of the women were really very pretty. The Mormon's religion, he said, was singular, but his wives were plural. The "Lady of Lyons" was produced at the Mormon theatre, but failed to satisfy the audience because there was only one Pauline in it, and it seemed ridiculous to make so much fuss over a single woman. The play was revised at once and presented the next evening with fifteen Paulines in the cast, whereupon it became a great success.

"Brigham Young," he said, "is an indulgent father and a numerous husband. He has two hundred wives. Just think of that! Oblige me by thinking of that. Two hundred souls with but a single thought, two hundred hearts that beat as one. He loves not wisely but two hundred well. He is dreadfully married. He is the most married man I ever saw in my life. I saw his mother-in-law when I was there. I can't tell you exactly how many there is of her, but it is a good deal. It strikes me that one mother-in-law is about enough to have in the family—unless you are fond of excitement. A few days before my arrival Brigham Young was married again to a young and really pretty girl. He told me confidentially that he shouldn't get married any more. He says that all he wants now is to live on in peace for the remainder of his days, and to have his dying pillow soothed by the loving hands of his family. Well—that's all right—I suppose; but if he has his dying pillow soothed by the loving hands of all his family, he'll have to go out of doors to die."

Robert Lowe heard this lecture, and laughed heartily all the evening. John Bright sat stolid, listening with grave attention, and afterward remarked:

"I must say I can't see what people find to enjoy in this lecture. The information is meagre, and is presented in a desultory, disconnected manner. In fact, I can't help seriously questioning some of his statements."

#### WIT AND HUMOR.

The ludicrous has two general divisions, not always distinguished, and not easy accurately to define, yet between



which it is important to discriminate. These are wit and humor, some differences between which may be pointed out in a series of parallel descriptions.

1. *Humor is enjoyed in proportion as it is expected ; wit in proportion as it is unexpected.*

The first limit to be affixed to that observation of relations which produces the feeling of wit is that they must be relations which excite surprise. If you tell me that all men must die I am very little struck with what you say, because it is not an assertion very remarkable for its novelty ; but if you were to say that man was like an hour-glass—that both must run out, and both render up their dust, I should listen to you with more attention, because I should feel something like surprise at the sudden relation you had struck out between two such apparently dissimilar ideas as a man and a time-glass.—SIDNEY SMITH.

To compare one man's singing to that of another, or to represent the whiteness of any object by that of milk or snow, or the variety of its colors by those of the rainbow, cannot be called wit, unless besides this obvious resemblance there be some further congruity discovered in the two ideas that is capable of giving the reader some surprise. Thus when a poet tells us the bosom of his mistress is as white as snow there is no wit in the comparison ; but when he adds with a sigh that it is as cold, too, it then grows into wit.—ADDISON.

Hence wit bears no repetition. If we enjoy hearing or telling a witty thing a second time it is not for the sensation of perceiving the wit itself, but to observe its expression in those who have not before heard it, a pleasure akin rather to humor.

In antithesis the pleasure of wit is increased by prevision of the witty climax. Thus when a man holds up a letter left at his door containing only the words "April Fool," and says, "I have often heard of people who wrote letters and forgot to sign their names, but this is the first instance in which I have known a man"—by this time the quick hearer has completed the anti-climax and anticipates the conclusion—"to sign his name and forget to write the letter."

Take another utterance of the same preacher : "The first day I was sea-sick I was afraid I should die ; the second day I didn't care

whether I did or not ; the third day—I was afraid I shouldn't." The hearer jumps at the climax and begins to laugh before it is enunciated.

When Dean Stanley came to this country the proprietor of a certain hotel, anxious to do honor to his guest, stationed a boy at the speaking-tube leading from the dean's room, and said :

"Now, boy, be very respectful. Listen attentively, and when you hear him call answer at once, and if he asks who is there reply, 'The boy, my lord.'"

The boy tried to follow instructions, but grew so nervous over their importance that when at last the dean did call through the tube and ask who was there the little fellow piped out :—

By the time the story has got this far everybody knows the boy cried, "The Lord, my boy."

Here it might at first seem that the mind enjoyed the wit better because it was prepared for it—in other words, when there was less surprise. But the wit lies, not in enunciating the entire sentence, but in conceiving it, and gives the hearer greater pleasure because the mind is able to do more than is asked of it ; not only appreciate the point, but anticipate it. Brevity is the soul of wit, and wit is most enjoyed by those who can communicate it by short-hand reporting. To perceive in the middle of a sentence what most of the world will catch only at the end is a mental triumph as gratifying as it is exhilarating.

On the other hand, to appreciate the humorous the mind needs, as it were, to adjust itself, and sometimes loses the pleasure of the first sentence or two of a humorous description because it is not quite certain whether what is said is to be judged by matter-of-fact standards or looked at through the spectacles of humor. When it is assured of the latter it drops the customary attitude of critical judgment and settles down to enjoyment.

2. *Wit is instantaneous ; humor is continuous.*

A witty story may be long, but only that the hearers' minds may be thoroughly prepared to appreciate the catastrophe ; or if it consist of witty dialogue, each happy hit

gives its individual pleasure, like so many taps; the taps may even be too frequent, as in Sheridan's comedies.

Humor may characterize an entire description, a whole book, all that is known of an intimate acquaintance. Humor pervades, while wit embellishes. Humor glows, wit sparkles.

3. *Humor may be manifest in action. Wit must be expressed in words.*

In both there is perception of incongruity, but in wit the connection of the two incongruous ideas is made by language, while in humor it may result from movement.

As you increase the incongruity you increase the humor; as you diminish it you diminish the humor. If a tradesman of corpulent and respectable appearance, with habiliments somewhat too ostentatious, were to slide down gently into the mud and decorate a pea-green coat, I am afraid we should all have the barbarity to laugh. If his hat and wig, like treacherous servants, were to desert their falling master, it certainly would not diminish our propensity to laugh. But if he were to fall into a violent passion and abuse everybody about him, nobody could possibly resist the incongruity of a pea-green tradesman, very respectable, sitting in the mud and threatening all the passers-by with the effects of his wrath. Here every circumstance heightens the humor of the scene—the gaiety of his tunic, the general respectability of his appearance, the rills of muddy water which trickle down his cheeks, and the harmless violence of his rage. But if instead of this we were to observe a dustman falling into the mud it would hardly attract any attention, because the opposition of ideas is so trifling and the incongruity so slight.—SYDNEY SMITH.

4. *Wit may be wholly imaginative. Humor involves sentiment and character.*

In fact the quality of wit exists wherever imagination percolates through the understanding; the sediment is the grain-gold of wit. But the quality of humor, depending upon various moral traits, exists only wherever a broad imagination is combined with a sweet

and tolerant moral sense that is devoid of malice and all uncharitableness and at peace with all mankind.—WEISS.

In the simply laughable there is a mere disproportion between a definite act and a definite person or end ; or a disproportion of the end itself to the rank or circumstances of the definite person. Combination of thoughts, words, or images will not of itself constitute humor, unless some peculiarity of temperament or character be indicated thereby as the cause of the same.

The excellencies of Sterne consist in bringing forward into distinct consciousness those *minutiæ* of thought and feeling which appear trifles yet have an importance for the moment, and which almost every man feels in one way or other. Thus is produced the novelty of an individual peculiarity, together with the interest of a something that belongs to our common nature. In short, Sterne seizes happily on those points in which every man is more or less a humorist. And, indeed, to be a little more subtle, the propensity to notice these things does in itself constitute the humorist, and the superadded power of so presenting them to men in general gives us the man of humor.—COLERIDGE.

The four humors in a man, according to the old physicians, were blood, choler, phlegm, and melancholy. So long as these were duly mixed all would be well. But so soon as any of them unduly preponderated the man became humorous, one humor or another bearing too great a sway in him. As such his conduct would not be according to the received rule of other men, but have something peculiar, whimsical, self-willed in it. In this self-asserting character of the humorous man lay the point of contact between the modern use of humor and the ancient. It was his humor which would lead a man to take an original view and aspect of things, a humorous aspect, first in the old sense, and then in that which we now employ. The great passage in English literature on humor and its history is the prologue, or "stage," as it is called, to Ben Jonson's "Every Man in His Humor."

#### PUNS.

The most purely abstract form of wit is punning, which Weiss defines a constraint of two different ideas to be ex-

pressed by one word, while wit proper is the constraint of two different objects to be expressed by one idea.

Several classes of puns have been distinguished.

i. *Where the same form has several meanings*; as Fair: 1, beautiful; 2, just; 3, a market-place.

At one light bound high overleaped all bound.—*Paradise Lost*.

"I'm transported to see you," as the convict said to the kangaroo.

"You are very pressing," as the filbert said to the nut-cracker.

A gentleman observed one day to Mr. Erskine that punning was the lowest kind of wit. "It is so," he replied, "and therefore at the foundation of them all."

I am something like a corn-field, with plenty of ears but no particular idea of music.—JOHN PHŒNIX.

Dean Ramsey tells of a soaked Scotch minister who was rubbed down at the kirk, and told he need not fear; he would be dry enough when he got into the pulpit.

ii. *Where two words of different meaning are pronounced alike though spelled differently*; as son and sun, peer and pier, etc.

Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew.—*Merchant of Venice*.

Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads.—*Id.*

They went and told the sexton,

And the sexton tolled the bell.—HOOD.

Theodore Hook said of an author who gave his publisher a dinner, "I suppose he poured his wine-cellar into his book-seller."

John Phœnix tells of a mother so frugal that her very first admonition to her infant was, "Buy low, baby."

While in the city of the Golden Gate I sent to the cook for a broiled chop, but he sent me a fried one. It must be a satisfaction in one's last moments to receive consolation from a San Franciscan friar.—*Id.*

The shadow of myself formed in her eye,

Which, being but the shadow of your son,

Becomes a sun, and makes your son a shadow.

—*King John*.

iii. A third class is of those that are spelled differently, and pronounced *nearly* though not quite alike; as, baron, barren; season, seizing, etc., though these more frequently produce *malaprops* than puns.

Mrs. Malaprop talks of contagious countries, and recommends a nice derangement of epitaphs.

iv. There are cases in which a phrase or idiom consisting of two or three words may be used *equivocally*, and thus considered as a pun.

Sydney Smith, hearing a boy read of patriarchs as partridges, declared it was too bad to make game of them.

"Is Mr. Smith a legal voter?" asked a politician at election. "Yes," replied a by-stander, "but being sick abed he is an ill-legal voter to-day."

One day, observing on a board the warning, "Beware the dog," Hood wrote underneath, "Ware be the dog?"

John Phoenix tells of an inquisitive man who married simply because, having exhausted all other subjects of inquiry, he asked the young lady if she would have him.

For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,  
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

—*Merchant of Venice*.

v. In Milton there are less puns than *conceits*, after the spirit of Italian literature.

Highly they raged against the Highest.—*Paradise Lost*.

His only pleasure is to be displeased.—COWPER.

"There's something in that," as the cat said when she peeped into the milk-jug.

vi. *The double pun* is usually too elaborate to have the mark of spontaneousness indispensable even to moderate enjoyment of a pun.

Freshman.—May I have the pleasure?

Miss Society.—Oui.

Freshman.—What does "we" mean?

Miss S.—O, U and I.

When Ouida asked Charles Reade for a name for her dog he suggested "Tonic," adding, "it is sure to be a mixture of bark, steal, and whine."

"Ten days or ten dollars," said the judge, and the prisoner, a sullen-looking fellow, paid the fine and was discharged. He walked moodily out of the court-room, but when he reached the door turned and showered a tirade of profane abuse upon the

magistrate. Then he ran into the corridor, but before he could reach the street he was recaptured, and stood again before the bar.

"Ten dollars more," said the judge; "if you had used language more chaste and refined, you would not have thus been chased and refined."

Coleridge remarks: "Baxter, like most scholastic logicians, had a sneaking affection for puns. The cause is—the necessity of attending to the primary sense of words, that is, the visual image or general relation expressed, and which remains common to all the after-senses, however widely or even incongruously differing from each other in other respects. For the same reason schoolmasters are commonly punsters. 'I have endorsed your Bill, sir,' said a pedagogue to a merchant, meaning he had flogged his son William."

But no man of sense betrays an affection for puns which is not sneaking. The temptation is often irresistible, but the offence should be accompanied by an apology, at least implied in the inflection, or in an humble drop of the eyelids. Let it never be forgotten that a pun for its own sake is at best but playful, and is permissible only when play is permissible.

Think of finding in grave discourse a triviality like this: "When the infinite I AM beheld his work of creation, he said Thou Art, and ART was."

While the mere pun is at best a childish frolicsomeness, the pun as an adjunct to wit may intensify the effect. When Sydney Smith recommended the bishops to lay their heads together to make a wooden pavement, and when Burke pointed out that majesty, deprived of its externals (m | a jest | y,) was only a jest, judgment underlay the puns and converted the thought into sarcasm.

Sometimes, however, a pun blunts the shaft of wit. For instance:

Irony employs wit to feather its purport. A Frenchman said of a man who really did never make a witty remark: "How full of wit that man must be! he never lets any escape." That when translated is improved, because the English word *any* can refer at once to no wit and to no person's escaping the effect of wit. Thus the irony is increased — *WITNESS*.

On the contrary, so far as any doubt is produced as to whether the meaning is, let any man escape—which is pure irony—or let any wit escape—which is wit edged by a pun—the hearer is confused, and his perception, divided between two ideas, is not strongly impressed by either.

It must be admitted that Charles Lamb, a capital authority, defends this very indefiniteness as follows:

An Oxford scholar, meeting a porter who was carrying a hare through the streets, accosts him with this extraordinary question: "Prithee, friend, is that thy own hare or a wig?"

There is no excusing this and no resisting it. A man might blur ten sides of paper in attempting a defence of it against a critic who should be laughter-proof. The quibble itself is not considerable. It is only a new turn given by a little false pronunciation to a very common though not very courteous inquiry. Put by one gentleman to another at a dinner-party it would have been vapid; to the mistress of the house it would have shown much less wit than rudeness. We must take in the totality of time, place, and person; the pert look of the inquiring scholar, the desponding looks of the puzzled porter; the one stopping at his leisure, the other hurrying on with his burden; the innocent though rather abrupt tendency of the first member of the question, with the utter and inextricable irrelevancy of the second; the place—a public street, not favorable to frivolous investigation; the affrontive quality of the primitive inquiry (the common question) invidiously transferred to the derivative (the new turn given to it) in the implied satire—namely, that few of that tribe are expected to eat of the good things which they carry, they being in most countries considered rather as the temporary trustees than owners of such dainties—which the fellow was beginning to understand; but then *wig* again comes in, and he can make nothing of it; all put together constitute a picture: Hogarth could have made it intelligible on canvas.

Yet nine out of ten critics will pronounce this a very bad pun, because of the defectiveness in the concluding member, which is its very beauty, and constitutes the surprise.—*Popular Fallacies*.

When the purpose of puns is to enliven what otherwise might be monotonous and dreary, puns appropriate and facile are often very entertaining.

"Mr. Duyckinck truly says that 'an auctioneer is bound to hold his own against all interlocutors. . . . It is his business to control the audiences and their puns. To do this he must keep his company in good humor, and least of all suffer any intellectual discomfort. Keese never lost his superiority.'

"But let us get into the auction-room. A narrative of the Battle of Waterloo is put up. 'How much for it?' Twenty-five cents was bid. 'There was no quarter at the Battle of Waterloo, my dear sir.' I believe it was the late Mr. Gowans who, when the auctioneer held in his hand 'Some Account of the Centaurs,' declared that there couldn't be a history of what never existed, and wanted an instance of a Centaur; whereupon the doubter was referred to the Biblical record of the head of John the Baptist coming in on a charger.

"A witticism sometimes might be beyond the ken of a portion of his audience, as when he spoke of Cadmus as the 'first post-boy,' because 'he carried letters from Phœnicia to Greece;' but when he knocked down Dagley's 'Death's Doings' for seventy-five cents to 'a decayed apothecary,' with the consolatory comment of 'smallest *fevers* gratefully received,' there was no lack of comprehension. Selling a black letter volume 'Concerning the Apparel of Ministers,' he supposed it referred probably to their 'surplus ornaments;' and he assured his audience that the 'Poems of the Rev. Mr. Logan' were the Banks and Braes of Bonnie Doon—at all events the brays.



"An illustration of his readiness was when a parcel of fancy envelopes was passed up to be sold in one lot. 'How many are there?' was shouted from various parts of the room. 'O! I don't know; too many to number. How much for the lot?' At last they were knocked down. 'What name?' 'Cowper!' 'It shall be Cowper's Task to count them,' instantly exclaimed the auctioneer.

"A joke much relished by the book-binding fraternity was his likening a ledger to Austria, because it was backed and cornered by Russia; and when it was knocked down to a Mr. Owen Phalen he paused at the name and said reflectively: 'Don't know about selling to a man that's always Owen and Phalen.'

"At one of the sales of furniture a table of curious design was sold to a bidder who left it to be called for. Some time elapsed, when a friend happening in admired the table, and wished to buy it at private sale. My father told him it was sold to a party who thus far had proved himself the most un-com-for-table-man he ever knew.

"I remember when a lot of Wade & Butcher's Sheffield razors was included in the catalogue the auctioneer said there was no limit to their sanguinary possibilities, for the purchaser 'might wade in blood and butcher all his friends.' 'Never mind, you'll have one volume less to read,' he said to a bidder who found his set of books short; and when another wanted to know where the outside of his copy of Lamb was, the auctioneer conjectured that 'somebody had fleeced it,' adding consolingly, 'but you can recover it, you know.' A back-gammon board was put up, 'to be sold on the square, and as perfect as any copy of Milton,' which comparison necessitated the explanation that there was a pair o' dice lost; and 'Three Eras of a Woman's Life,' elicited the running comment of 'Wonderful woman—only three errors. How much—thirty cents—only ten cents apiece—not very expensive errors after all.'"

5. *The pleasure of wit lies in the understanding; of humor in the sentiment.* Hence:

6. *Wit is without sympathy, while humor is based upon it.* Wit laughs *at*, while humor laughs *with*. Wit punishes, but discourages; humor is a solvent in which the severest admonishings may be accepted hopefully.

We do well to consider that wit is an untractable faculty. Unless it is well bridled it will overleap the bounds of propriety. Most of the keen darts of wit that one hears whizzing by have been pointed, barbed, and poisoned by malignity, and fix on some person the stigma of vice, folly, or weakness. . . . The wit can hardly prevail on himself to withhold a gibe for the sake of affection. He falsely presumes that his friends will not smart under the thrusts he gives them; or if they do, that they will forgive the offense since it is committed by him. So he goes on, putting their patience to the proof, till he has provoked them past endurance. He who would be a wit must be content to boast few friends. A joke is an "air-drawn dagger," from which our flesh instinctively

shrinks. We see not the hand that grasps it, and cannot divine how deep it will strike; should it prove harmless, we do not thank it for startling us.—HERVEY.

This sharpness of tongue provokes retort, the bitterness of which is not softened to the victim by the reflection that he has deserved it, and that the sympathy of by-standers will be with the one first offended.

“No woman is worth looking at after thirty,” remarked a bride with youthful arrogance. “Quite true,” calmly replied her companion a few years older, “nor worth listening to before.”

Talleyrand was lame, and Madame de Stäel was cross-eyed. There was no love lost between them, and both disliked to be reminded of their infirmities.

“Monsieur,” said madame, meeting her dearest foe one day, “pray how is that poor leg?”

“Crooked, *as you see*, madame,” was the reply.

Frederick the Second had a liking for the witty philosopher Mendelssohn, but was once induced as an experiment to put at his plate the following note :

Mendelssohn is an ass.

FREDERICK II.

Mendelssohn took up the note, read it, and remarked that some one had taken an unpardonable liberty with his majesty, having here presumed to say that Mendelssohn was one ass, and that Frederick was the second.

A certain petulant Greek, objecting to Anacharsis that he was a Scythian—“True,” says Anacharsis, “my country disgraces me, but you disgrace your country.”

#### IRONY.

Where wit is sarcastic, humor is ironical.

Irony is jesting hidden beneath gravity, while humor is gravity concealed behind the jest. . . . The mind uses irony when it gravely states an opinion or sentiment which is the opposite of its belief, with the moral purpose of showing its real dissent from the opinion. It must, therefore, be done with this wink from the purpose in it, so that it may not pass for an acquiescence in an oppo-

site sentiment. It may be done so well as to deceive even the very elect; and perhaps the ordinary mind complains of irony as wanting in straightforwardness. There is a moment of hesitation, when the mind stoops over this single intention with a double appearance, and doubts upon which to settle as the real prey. So that only carefully poised minds with the falcon's or the vulture's glance can always discriminate rapidly enough to seize the point. In this moment of action the pleasure of irony is developed, which arises from a discovery of the contrast between the thing said and the thing intended. And this pleasure is heightened when we observe the contrast between the fine soul who means nobly and his speaking as if he meant to be ignoble. Then the ignoble thing is doubly condemned, first, by having been briefly mistaken to be the real opinion of the speaker, and then by the flash of recognition of the speaker's superiority. . . . In matters which are morally indifferent irony is only a jesting which is disguised by gravity, as when we apparently agree with the notions of another person which are averse from our own, so that we puzzle him not only on the point of our own notion, but on the point of his own, and he begins to have a suspicion that he is not sound in the matter. This suspicion is derived from the mind's instinctive feeling that irony is a trait of a superior person who can afford to have a stock of original ideas with which he tests opinion, and who holds them so securely that he can never play with them a losing game. . . . A man who pretends to hold the opposite of his own belief is morally a hypocrite until we detect that slight touch of banter which is the proof of genuine irony. Then we see that he is honest though he equivocates, for he believes himself with sincerity. A man who can afford this is to that extent superior to the man who, whether right or wrong, is hopelessly didactic, and incapable of commending his own opinions by the bold ease with which he may deplore them.—Weiss.

Irony assumes on the part of the hearer a certain acquaintance with the speaker which gives the hearer reason to believe that the sentiments uttered cannot be the genuine belief of the speaker. Only so far as this acquaintance is rightfully assumed has the speaker any right

to complain if his irony is received as statement of fact, and if he is himself rated accordingly.

Thus if an artist were to point out the superiority of a wretched wood-cut over a fine steel-engraving, a person who knew the wood-cut to be wretched would do well to smile over the criticism as ironical. But if a stranger should gravely utter the same remarks, the same person might listen respectfully, having no reason to suppose that the stranger was less of an ignoramus than he represented himself, and not wishing to hurt his feelings by exposing his stupidity.

Genuine humorists are occasionally rebuked by the grave stare of surprise called forth by a remark meant to be received as ironical. Especially common is this experience with children, whose calm glance of disapproval is often more effective than a stinging reply.

Irony is often carried beyond decent bounds. When Sydney Smith explained to a shocked parishioner that he kept his dog chained because it had acquired an unfortunate habit of eating up the parish boys, buttons and all, his humor is possibly within reason, the buttons making it at least thoroughly obvious. But the question becomes doubtful when he informs a gentleman that he has one secret wish—to roast a Quaker; adding that it may be wrong, that the Quaker would undoubtedly suffer acutely, but that every one has his tastes, and his own is to roast a Quaker; one would satisfy him, only one; but it was one of the peculiarities he had striven against in vain, and he trusted his hearer would pardon his weakness.

In like manner Charles Lamb, asked how he liked babies, stammered: "B-b-boiled." A modern "humorist," plagiarizing the irony and the pun, has elaborated them into a paragraph fit only for the Fiji-islanders:

In every age and every clime the best and noblest men loved children. Even wicked men have a tender spot left in their hard-

ened hearts for little children. The great men of the earth love them. Dogs love them. Kamahanekekemokimodahroah, the king of the Cannibal islands, loves them—rare, and no gravy. Ah, yes, we all love children.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

Equally revolting is the following :

The best thing to make grape-vines grow is dogs ; bury 'em right down among the roots. Some people prefer grandmothers and their other relations. But gi' me dogs and cats.—MAX ADELER.

Swift's "Modest Proposal" for preventing the children of the poor in Ireland from being burdensome, and for making them beneficial by using them for food, was seriously quoted and condemned.

The impulse to irony has been thus explained :

Suppose I venture to play before a company a sonata of Beethoven, and that as I rise a lady rather gushingly exclaims :

"Oh, thank you, thank you ; we have all enjoyed it so much !"

Now, if I have played to my own fair satisfaction, I simply bow and say I am glad to have given pleasure. If the speaker is a friend, and I feel that I have done particularly well, I may even unbosom myself to the extent of remarking that I think the performance was tolerable for me.

If I have been nervous, have blundered, have played much below my possibilities, I shall probably endeavor to suppress my annoyance, accept the compliments without comment, and change the subject.

If I have played shockingly, losing all grasp of the spirit of the composition, and merely striking upon the piano the ivory and ebony equivalent of the notes on the score, without other thought than the set purpose to grit my teeth, sit firm on the stool, and get to the end of the piece without breaking down, I shall probably look my flatterer steadily in the eye as I remark that she is very kind to say so.

But if in addition to utter failure in this instance I see that to attempt to play was idiotic, such pieces being far beyond my limited accomplishments, and if this individual discomfiture sinks indistinguishable into the general consciousness of ineffable weakness and stupidity, which alone could have persuaded me to try

what a well-constructed automaton would know I was incapable to do, so that I long to get into the attic of an empty house and snort at myself, then I shall probably smile blandly on my tormentor, assure her that in congratulating me she chooses the right word, since the audience should share the honor of the performance, the finest artistic efforts being possible only in a company of artists, and that if I seemed at the moment to be inspired it was because the sympathy and appreciation of my listeners lifted me out of myself, so that instead of playing the sonata I had really been played by it, and so on.

This I conceive to be irony. Whether I shall so turn the expression as to show my companion that I mean it for irony depends upon the respect I have for her. If I like her I shall very likely intensify my expressions until she recognizes the sarcasm, even if I have to go to the extent of promising some time to play for her a piece really worthy of myself and the audience—"Silver Threads among the Gold," for instance. But if I think her silly or malicious, it will probably relieve me a little to have her either believe all that I say, or believe that I believe it, in which case I shall graduate my exaggeration according to her credulity.

There are three degrees of indignation.

The first, indignation pure and simple, finds sufficient expression in strong words that directly manifest the feeling.

Beyond this is a stage where language is inadequate, and one turns away with a gesture, a shrug, a withering glance. This is scorn.

But there is a step beyond scorn, where the indignation is too bitter for silence, and must, by elaborating and exaggerating, grind the shameful conviction into one's soul, gloating over its artistic completeness. This is irony.

Banter is the *badinage* of the French, irony their *persiflage*.

Real irony seems to stand midway between banter and sarcasm. Banter is the playful and sarcasm the ferocious form of irony. . . . The peculiar mode of disputation adopted by Socrates consisted in a playful entanglement of his opponent in admissions which, while appearing to support and strengthen the argument of his opponent, in reality involved him in an absurd conclusion. He was made to take the bait, all unconscious of the hook by

which he was to be captured. There was a perfect antagonism between the appearance and the fact—the appearance being the assurance of victory, the fact the certainty of defeat; and the defeat was brought about by the use of the very weapons on which the disputant relied for success. This the Greeks called *eiporeia*.—*L. A.* 1742.

A true sarcasm is like a sword-stick—it appears at first sight to be much more innocent than it really is, till, of a sudden, there leaps something out of it—sharp, and deadly, and incisive, which makes you tremble and recoil.—*SYDNEY SMITH*.

In polished society the dread of being ridiculous models every word and gesture into propriety, and produces an exquisite attention to the feelings and opinions of others; it curbs the sallies of eccentricity, it recalls the attention of mankind to one uniform standard of reason and common-sense.—*SYDNEY SMITH*.

Hence, too, the true ludicrous is its own end. When serious satire commences, or satire that is felt as serious, however comically dressed, free and genuine laughter ceases; it becomes *sar-donic*.—*COLERIDGE*.

Ridicule is not only confined to questions of less moment, but is fitter for refuting error than for supporting truth, for restraining from wrong conduct than for inciting to the practice of what is right. Nor are these the sole restrictions; it is not properly levelled at the false, but at the *absurd* in tenets; nor can the edge of ridicule strike with equal force every species of misconduct; it is not the criminal part which it attacks, but that which we denominate silly or foolish.—*CAMPBELL*, i. 59. See also 64, 69.

7. *Wit is spontaneous; humor may be cultivated.*

If you have real wit it will flow spontaneously, and you need not aim at it; for in that case the rule of the Gospel is reversed, and it shall prove, seek and ye shall not find.—*CHESTERFIELD*.

It does not, however, follow that no study is to be given to the expression of wit. The idea may be an inspiration, but not necessarily at the time of utterance. Oftener it is conceived in solitude, turned and polished in the mind, and

then held in readiness for a fitting occasion. Only by this habit of perfecting the expression of a happy idea can be acquired the habit of expressing such ideas with precision and pungency when they are struck out in the friction of conversation. When the idea is thus conceived there are few even of those noted for their wit who do not pause to turn it over once or twice in their minds before giving it utterance.

The condition of putting forth ideas in order to be witty operates much in the same salutary manner as the condition of finding rhymes in poetry; it reduces the number of performers to those who have vigor enough to overcome incipient difficulties, and makes a sort of provision that that which need not be done at all should be done well whenever it is done. For we may observe that mankind are always more fastidious about that which is pleasing than they are about that which is useful.—**SYDNEY SMITH.**

On the other hand, to delve for sparkling sayings, to wrench and distort ideas and words for the sake of being funny, is as futile as it is contemptible.

Perpetual aiming at wit is a very bad part of conversation. It is done to support a character; it generally fails; it is a sort of insult to the company and a restraint on the speaker.—**SWIFT.**

The source of bad writing is the desire to be something more than a man of sense—the straining to be thought a genius, and it is just the same in speech-making. If men would only say what they have to say in plain terms how much more eloquent they would be.—**COLERIDGE.**

Hence to be recognized and invited as a witty man involves a responsibility and a condition of service few would care to assume. One might as well be asked as a newspaper reporter, or to play the violin for dancing. Soon after the war “Petroleum V. Nasby” attempted to lecture, and people went to hear him expecting to be amused. The lec-



ture was well enough in its way, but it was a serious discussion of the situation and people felt themselves aggrieved. People do not look for instruction to those by whom they are accustomed to be amused. "Professed wits, though they are generally courted for the amusement they afford, are seldom respected for the qualities they possess."

A witty man is a dramatic performer ; in process of time he can no more exist without applause than he can exist without air ; if his audience be small, or if they are inattentive, or if a new wit defrauds him of any portion of his admiration, it is all over with him—he sickens and is extinguished. The applauses of the theatre in which he performs are so essential to him that he must obtain them at the expense of decency, friendship, and good feeling. It must be always probable, too, that a *mere* wit is a person of light and frivolous understanding. His business is not to discover relations of ideas that are useful, and have a real influence in life, but to discover the more trifling relations that are only amusing ; he never looks at things with the native eye of common sense, but is always gazing at the world through a Claude Lorraine glass—discovering a thousand appearances which are created only by the instrument of inspection, and covering every object with factitious and unnatural colors. In short, the character of a mere wit it is impossible to consider as very amiable, very respectable, or very safe.—SIDNEY SMITH.

Oliver Wendell Holmes informs us that—

It is a very serious thing  
To be a funny man,

and most of those who have gained a reputation for wit, or made the acquaintance of one of those preternaturally solemn and funereal-looking individuals whose lives are made miserable by the consciousness that the public looks to them for a diurnal dose of disguised physic in the shape of jokes, can corroborate the genial doctor's statement. The responsibility entailed by a reputation for being a perennial font of spontaneous humor is enough to make a man prematurely aged. He must constantly maintain a high water of hilarity, and occasionally surpass himself. Not satisfied with his professional efforts in this line, he is expected to scatter jests around him in his daily walk and conversation, to write neatly turned epigrams for young ladies' albums, and to scintillate at social entertainments.

If he is invited out to dinner, it is a tacit understanding that he shall pay for the meal

by his humor, and it behooves him to go plentifully provided with a stock of extempore puns and conundrums, to be dispensed at appropriate intervals. If he does not feel up to the mark, his host will probably stir up his flagging energies with the remark that he is unusually dull, or some other pleasing reminder of his breach of the implied contract. A fearful warning against the social perils of a humorist's career is conveyed by the anecdote of the gentleman who habitually earned his dinner by his wit, and on one occasion of temporary absent-mindedness was recalled to a sense of his duties to society by the following message, delivered in an audible tone by the daughter of the hostess: "Mamma's compliments to Mr. —, and she wishes to know when he is going to begin to be funny."—*Boston Traveler*.

## PRACTICAL JOKES.

We most of us attempt to be funny only in speech. Mimicry and contortion, the imitation of deformity and the antics of the clown, are usually left to hired performers. Our attempts to be funny are in the direction of the comedy of knowledge—that is, comedy evolved from the unexpected detection of definite relations—which we call wit; or of the comedy of ignorance—that is, comedy evolved from a reference to indefinite and undefinable relations—which we call humor. The practical joke is not yet banished, but it is justly looked upon as vulgar and stupid. We may yield to a sudden impulse to pull the chair from behind a person just sitting down, but we are ashamed both of the act and of the disposition that prompts it. Such acts, like a horse-laugh, may show exuberance of animal spirits, but they lower the perpetrator, both in his own esteem and in that of his companions.

The actor Sothern was much given to practical jokes. He had once invited a company to dinner, and though one of the intended guests was not present at the hour appointed he insisted upon beginning the meal. Presently the belated guest was heard entering the hall. Sothern instantly proposed that the whole company should get under the table. Without an objection, trusting to the actor's wit for some comical climax, the unsuspecting guests hurriedly crawled upon the floor and awaited results, quite unaware that their host had kept his seat and was finishing his soup.

The tardy guest was full of apologies. "Don't mention it,"

said Sothern, "we are only at soup; sit down and be helped." The gentleman did so with a puzzled look at the empty chairs around the table. "O," said Sothern, "you miss the other gentlemen. They are all here, but for some inexplicable reason the moment you were announced they all crept under the table. What they are doing there is more than I know."

It is easier to imagine than to describe the various expressions upon the faces of the victims, as, one by one, they crawled out and resumed their chairs. But it is safe to say they were all cured of participating in practical jokes proposed by Mr. Sothern.

An ingenious writer has propounded what he calls "The Gelatic System," a theory of the history of laughter.

a. *Pre-Humoristic Age*.—It is a psychological fact that brutes are devoid of humor, and that savages have a minimum. So evenly did mind and humor keep pace that prior to the time men laughed they did not know enough to keep a record of events. This age, then, exactly covered what are known as pre-historic times.

b. *Bacchanalian Age*.—The innate germ of mirth doubtless sprang up under the enlivening influence of wine. The type of this age was drunken silliness, humor of the lowest order. The character of Thersites, in Shakspeare's "Troilus and Cressida," is an anachronism, for Thersites could not have been the representative humorist of his time. Though Bacchanalian orgies have always flourished, the epoch of history characterized by them came to an end B. C. 550.

c. *Burlesque Age, B. C. 550—A. D. 476*.—Becoming more refined, the people were loath to laugh at themselves, and sought how they might laugh at each other. Hence the rise of comedy, for in comedy the laugh is not at the actor himself, but at the person he represents. The Burlesque Age embraces the three well-known forms of comedy, namely: the Old Comedy (caricature), the Middle Comedy (criticism), and the New Comedy (manners). Though Greece and Rome were the proprietors of comedy, the spirit of burlesque was rife everywhere, even among the Jews. In accordance with the principle of the parallel growth of mind and humor, it will be noticed that the decline of humor at the time of the Empire was exactly proportional to the decline of mental activity.

d. *Hunchback Age, A. D. 476—750*.—The barbarians, of course, had very shallow conceptions of the ludicrous. The discrepancy in height between a tall and a short man, or any personal deformity, was enough to capsize the gravity of a king. A dwarf or a hunchback was an indispensable member of a prince's retinue, and a hunchback was a luxury fit for an emperor.

e. *Idiot Age, A. D. 750—950*.—Mental deformity was discovered to be more comical than physical, and diligent search was made for idiots to add the crowning grace to noble households. First-class idiots were of course reserved for the king. An extra-stupid idiot of superior imbecility and profound obtuseness is said to have lived in the days of Charles the Fat. It is not an interesting period to linger over.

f. *Clown Age, A. D. 950—1350*.—The reign of the natural idiot was followed by that of the artificial idiot, who, though called like his predecessor a fool, was really a keen-witted buffoon. Touchstone, in "As You Like It," and Wamba, son of Witless, in "Ivanhoe," are representative "fools" of this period, when wit began to sparkle as not before since Terence. Traces of the Clown Age are still to be seen in the circus and the pantomime.

g. *Maskerading Age*, A. D. 1350-1500.—People now became eager for more fun, and studied how to develop their own creative humor. Humor took a fantastic turn; everybody was seized with an imitative spirit, and straightway sprang up the idea of a show, in which everybody might select a part and play it to suit himself, the fun being proportional to the incongruousness of the action with the character.

h. *Dinner-Table Age*, A. D. 1500-1625.—The next type of humor was personal bantering. Every Falstaff received standing invitations to dinner, and was welcome at all hours. Clubs were formed whose object was the evolution of jocularly through the medium of the flowing bowl, the prototypes of some modern organizations. Royalty itself tried to be witty, as witness the jokes of King James at the expense of Steenie.

i. *Book Age*, A. D. 1625-1850.—Humor was next boiled down and bottled up ready for use in a book. Three varieties are noticeable: aerial, such as the shy, delicate, sensitive airiness of Addison, Steele, Goldsmith, Hawthorne—often so deliciously coy as to elude laughter; grotesque, the characteristic variety of a motley crowd, led first by Don Quixote, and afterward by Tom and Jerry; satiric, which is subdivided into (i) satires on man, like Swift's Gulliver and Byron's Don Juan, and (ii) satires on men, *i. e.*, not on the way God has seen fit to make man, but on men's errors and foibles.

k. *Newspaper Age*, A. D. 1850.—Though the humorous book is still written, and always will be written, it no longer typifies a historic era. Indeed, remnants of all former ages are seen to-day. Carousals are common; the comedian still pries open the mouth; side-shows exhibit among other wonderful curiosities dwarfs and idiots; harlequin still tickles the ribs; masquerades and carnivals are still popular, especially in romance countries; jests pass from lip to lip, and slang, an offshoot of the Dinner-Table Age, is a weed of luxurious growth: you can sit in solitude and smile at the vagaries of your favorite author; but the funny newspaper man is supreme. He is the Jupiter of the humorous heavens and earth, and every day you can see his lightnings and hear his thunder.

#### DANGERS OF WIT AND HUMOR.

"See what a command of language those Irish orators have," remarked some one to Archbishop Whately. "See rather what command language has of them," was the reply.

Wit, of all powers the most envied and dreaded, becomes a curse when it forgets its legitimate service as one of man's agencies of usefulness. Humor, which lightens every load, illumines every darkness, cheers every heart, diverts every sorrow, which has well been called the great lubricator of life, must yet remain subordinate to judgment and duty, or it will prey like a fungus, rotting to the core what it seems only to adorn.

For humor is, after all, a view of life that distorts. It may be diverting from its novelty to have a Mark Tapley

exult in his master's wretched plights because it makes it creditable to be jolly ; but after all it is better to be wise enough to avoid wretched plights. A view of life that makes our wretchedness less by dwelling on the disadvantages of those who are happy will, if carried too far, lead us to underestimate the distance between wretchedness and happiness, and thus remove the spur to ambition.

Humor is one of the elements of genius ; but if it predominate it becomes a makeshift. Humor accompanies the decadence of art, which it destroys and annihilates.—*GOETHE*.

Especially is it the tendency of humor to break down the distinctions of right and wrong.

Is there some one humorific point common to all that can be called humorous? I am not prepared to answer this fully, even if my time permitted ; but I think there is, and that it consists in a certain reference to the general and the universal, by which the finite great is brought into identity with the little, or the little with the finite great, so as to make both nothing in comparison with the infinite. The little is made great, and the great little, in order to destroy both ; because all is equal in contrast with the infinite. . . . My devil was to be, like Goethe's, the universal humorist, who should make all things vain and nothing worth by a perpetual collation of the great with the little in the presence of the infinite.—*COLERIDGE*.

If we wish to find a passage from irony to humor we should have to look for it in cases where good-nature assumes the positive attribute of impartiality, because humor is a kind of disposition to adopt the whole of human nature, fuse all its distinctions, tolerate all its infirmities, and assemble vice and misery to receive rations of good cheer.—*WEISS*.

All this is wrong and harmful. So far as humor helps us to bear the evils we cannot help it is a blessing ; but let us beware lest it make us content with imperfections that we might remove, faults that we might cure, apathy

that unnerves us. In comparison with the infinite, human accomplishment is indeed at highest but insignificant. But human *purpose* has all the possibilities of infinitude itself, and man will approach the infinite only as he cleaves fast to moral distinctions.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN, CATSKILLS, September 8, 1867.

How broad and beautiful a belt  
Of landscape doth the eye attain ;  
The hills and vales together melt  
Into a low and level plain.

*Thus men are great and men are small  
In human eyes ;  
So puny all, that none look tall  
Seen from the skies.*

Yet gleam the colors fresh and bright,  
The fields are green ; the Hudson blue ;  
The harvests bathe in golden light ;  
Diamonds sparkle in the dew.

*So have the acts of humankind  
Distinctive hue ;  
Noble from base is clear defined  
In highest view.*

Sydney Smith concludes : " I wish, after all I have said about wit and humor, that I could satisfy myself of their good effects upon the character and disposition ; but I am convinced the probable tendency of both is to corrupt the understanding and the heart." " In cheerful souls," says Novalis, " there is no wit. Wit is a disturbance of the equipoise."

But this is true only where wit and humor have undue predominance. Says Hazlitt, " Man is the only animal that laughs and weeps, for he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are and what they ought to be." When the perception of this difference causes laughter alone, humor is indeed corroding. He who can make sport of sins has defective notions

as to their enormity, and leads others to think too lightly of committing them.

What more plain nonsense can there be than to be earnest in jest, to be continual in divertisement, or constant in pastime, to make extravagance all our play, and sauce all our diet? Is not this plainly the life of a child that is ever busy yet never hath anything to do? or the life of that mimical brute which is always active in playing uncouth and unlucky tricks, which, could it speak, might surely pass well for a professed wit?—BARROW.

We see in needleworks and embroideries it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground; judge, therefore, of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye.—BACON.

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Dangers of wit and humor, p. 133.

#### SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What do you think of Sothern's joke (page 131) ?

Are the stories on pages 71, 88, 229, and 253, witty or humorous ?



## CHAPTER VIII.

### EGOTISM.

THE pest of society is egotists. There are dull and bright, sacred and profane, coarse and fine egotists. 'Tis a disease that, like influenza, falls on all constitutions. In the disease known to physicians as *chorea* the patient sometimes turns round and continues to spin slowly on one spot. Is egotism a metaphysical variety of this malady? The man runs round a ring formed by his own talent, falls into an admiration of it, and loses relation to the world. It is a tendency in all minds. One of its annoying forms is a craving for sympathy. The sufferers parade their miseries, tear the lint from their bruises, reveal their indictable crimes, that you may pity them. They like sickness, because physical pain will extort some show of interest from the bystanders, as we have seen children who, finding themselves of no account when grown people come in, will cough till they shake to draw attention.—EMERSON.

In considering the relation to conversation of one's individuality, egotism, which is properly simply the tendency to allude to one's self, should be distinguished from self-conceit and vanity.

**Self-Conceit** denotes a narrow mind and a selfish disposition. It is independent of the opinion of others, attributing censure to envy and indifference to lack of perception. Hence it is not prompted to do kindly offices in order to win good opinion. It feels no gratitude toward those who bestow favors, receiving such attention as a rightful perquisite. It is incapable of sympathy, of love, of any real fellowship.

Nothing so haughty and assuming as ignorance where self-conceit bids it set up for infallible.—SOUTH.

**Vanity** is a weakness, but is less selfish. It is dependent upon the opinion of others, and is helpless when neglected. Hence it will cheerfully make sacrifice for others

which is likely to secure their good-will. It abounds in gratitude for favors, is quick to sympathize, as eager to love as to be loved, and steadfast in fellowship so long as it feels itself appreciated.

Infuse vanity into such a man as Goldsmith and it adds a child-like charm to his character ; it gives a tinge of delightful humor to his writings, and enables his friends to love him the more heartily because they have the right to pay themselves by a little kindly contempt. Make a Byron vain and half his magnificent force of mind will be wasted by silly efforts to attract the notice of his contemporaries by attacking their best feelings and affecting (a superfluous task) vices which he does not possess. The vanity of a Wordsworth enables him to treat with a profound disdain the sneers of Edinburgh reviewers and the dull indifference of the mass of his readers ; but it encourages him also to become a literary sloven, to spoil noble thought by grovelling language, and to subside into supine obstructiveness.\* Conversely the vanity of a Pope makes him suffer unspeakable tortures from the stings of critics compared to whom Jeffrey was a giant, condescend to the meanest artifices to catch the applause of his contemporaries, and hunger and thirst for the food which Wordsworth rejected with contempt. But it also enables him to become within his own limits the most exquisite of artists in words, to increase in skill as he increased in years, and to coin phrases for a distant posterity even out of the most trifling ebullition of passing spite. The vanity of a Milton excites something approaching to awe. The vanity of a Congreve excites our rightful contempt. Vanity seems to be at once the source of the greatest weaknesses and of the greatest achievements. To write a history of vanity would be to write the history of the greatest men of our race, for soldiers and statesmen have been as vain as poets and artists. Chatham was vain ; Wolfe was vain ; Nelson was childishly vain, and the great Napoleon was as vain as the vainest.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

There are some men who need praise as much as flowers need sunshine. You cannot get the best work out of them without it. It is vain to preach to them self-reliance ; they need to be propped

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\* This should be attributed rather to self-conceit than to vanity.

and buttressed by others' opinions—to be braced by encouragement and sympathy. "Praise me, Mr. Pope," said Sir Godfrey Kneller to the poet of Twickenham as the latter sat for his portrait; "you know I can't do as well as I should unless you praise me." Ridiculous as the request may seem, who doubts that the crooked little poet got a better portrait by complying with it? And when was praise more efficacious, when did it yield a richer harvest, than when bestowed on the sickly poet himself?

Bulwer, in his essay on "The Efficacy of Praise" in "Caxtoniana," observes that every actor knows how a cold house chills him, and how necessary to the full sustainment of a great part is the thunder of applause. He states that the elder Kean, when he was performing at some theatre in this country, came to the manager when the play was half over and said: "I can't go on the stage again, sir, if the pit keeps its hands in its pockets. *Such an audience would extinguish Ætna.*" Upon this the manager told the audience that Mr. Kean, not being accustomed to the severe intelligence of American citizens, mistook their silent attention for courteous disappointment, and that if they did not applaud Mr. Kean as he was accustomed to be applauded they could not see Mr. Kean act as he was accustomed to act. Of course the audience took the hint, and as their fervor rose so rose the genius of the actor, and their applause contributed to the triumphs it rewarded.

—MATHEWS.

**Reference to One's Self.**—So serious a fault is egotism that it is a common precept to avoid all allusion to one's self. "Don't speak of yourself at all," runs the old proverb, "for if you speak ill of yourself people will believe you and despise you for the fact; and if you speak well they will disbelieve you and despise you for the lie."

But it is possible to speak of one's self without such boasting as induces disbelief or such detraction as belittles. No subject of conversation is more natural or more interesting.

Egotism is to be condemned only when it offends against time and place, as in a history or an epic poem. To censure it in a

monody or a sonnet is almost as absurd as to complain of a circle for being round. . . . If I could judge others by myself I should not hesitate to affirm that the most interesting passages in all writings are those in which a writer develops his own feelings.

—COLERIDGE.

**Talk About an Imaginary Self.**—The fact is, the egotism which society so justly condemns is not talk about one's real self, but talk about a desirable self—not about what we really are, but about what we want our friends to think we are. The egotist more or less consciously conceals the real John, and patches up by hints as to his antecedents, his history, his courage, his probity, his tenderness, his regard from others, an ideal John that shall compel admiration. We feel the contrast when in a moment of delight or discouragement he blunders upon a genuine revelation. So close-locked does every man try to keep the secret of his life that few can resist the temptation to peer in when he opens the lid; as few have the grace to listen patiently while he describes without opening it the wonderful things he would like to have us believe it contains.

It is in this opening the lid that the charm of frankness consists. To speak without reserve of what most persons conceal indicates a consciousness of general purity of life and integrity of purpose that inspires confidence and prompts to similar avowal. Dr. Johnson, paying court to Mrs. Porter, told her plainly that he was of mean extraction, that he had no money, and that one of his uncles had been hanged. She as frankly replied that she had no more money than he, and that though none of her relatives ever had been hanged she had several who ought to be.

The desire to please, to shine with a particularly engaging lustre, to draw a fascinating picture of one's self, banishes from conversation all that is sterling and most of what is humorous. As soon as a strong current of mutual admiration begins to flow the human interest triumphs entirely over the intellectual, and

the commerce of words, consciously or not, becomes secondary to the commercing of eyes. Each simply waits upon the other to be admired, and the talk dwindles into platitudinous piping.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

**Frank Self-revelment Interesting.**—It is seldom that we are indifferent to genuine confession, but it is very seldom that we hear it.

The egotist does not always eulogize himself directly. He may make you father-confessor and acknowledge to you a fault or habit that is exceedingly dishonorable to him—"he cannot help it; it is his way." Perhaps he has resolved at all hazards to take a prominent part in conversation, even though it be at the expense of his character and the comfort of the company. Else he talks of his faults in order to demonstrate his sincerity or some other virtue. "He is none of your dissemblers; he must tell you all." Another confesses his crimes on purpose to show us his shrewdness, tact, or courage in committing them, in escaping detection or punishment; or the generosity or high-mindedness with which he made amends for them; thus does he glory in his shame.—*HERVEY*.

**Egotism not Eradicated by Silence.**—Egotism cannot be overcome or concealed by abstaining from mention of self. The writers of Port Royal were so disgusted with the predominance of the pronoun *I* in contemporary writings that they uniformly shunned it as savoring of self-conceit. But it is not the use of this pronoun that betrays the egotist—it is the feeling that prompts its utterance, as betrayed by the connection and the tone.

A false humility, or, in the world's parlance, a false modesty, is as criminal and offensive as pride, for it is that pride in disguise. Pride may not prompt the frequent use of the pronoun; on the other hand, egotism in the first degree is often perpetrated when there is a careful avoidance of it; and in general he who makes a show of great pains to keep aloof from a fault does thereby declare that he knows himself to be addicted to it. Some of the vainest of mortals are often heard to say, "without boasting," "I do not

like to praise myself," "Pardon me for speaking of myself." Again there are very humble characters who may use this kind of apologetical phrases. Let us beware of words; nothing is more common than to be misled by them.—HERVEY.

All great men not only know their business, but they usually know that they know it, and are not only right in their main opinions, but they usually know that they are right in them; only they don't think much of themselves on that account. Arnolfo knows that he can build a good dome at Florence; Albert Dürer writes calmly to one who had found fault with his work, "It cannot be better done." Sir Isaac Newton knows that he has worked out a problem or two that would have puzzled anybody else; only they do not expect their fellow-men therefore to fall down and worship them. They have a curious undersense of powerlessness, feeling that the greatness is not in them but through them; that they could not be any other thing than God made them. And they see something divine and God-made in every other man they meet, and they are endlessly, foolishly, and incredibly merciful.—RUSKIN.

The difficulty is to be certain that this positiveness of statement has the warrant of genius behind it. Mr. Ruskin himself has used much language that only very great assurance in his own judgment could warrant. Thus in reply to some one who objected to the contempt with which he had spoken of such men as John Stuart Mill and Goldwin Smith, complaining that the disciples of such men are "hurt and made angry when words they do not like are used of their leaders," he answered:

"Well, my dear sir, I solemnly believe that the less they like it the better my work has been done, for you will find if you think deeply of it that the chief of all the curses of this unhappy age is the universal babble of its fools and of the flocks that follow them, rendering the quiet voices of the wise men of all past time inaudible. This is, first, the result of the invention of printing, and of the easy power and extreme pleasure to vain persons of seeing themselves in print. When it took a twelve-month's hard work to make a single volume legible men considered a little the difference between one book and another; but now when not only anybody can get themselves made legible through any quantity of volumes in a week, but the doing so becomes a means of living to them, and they can fill their stomachs with the foolish foam of their lips, the universal pestilence of falsehood fills the mind of the world as cicadas do olive leaves, and the first necessity of our moral government is to extricate from among the insectile noise the few books and words that are divine. And this has been my main work from my youth up—not caring to speak my own words, but to discern, whether in painting or scripture, what is eternally good and vital, and to strike away from it pitilessly what is worthless and venomous. So that now, being old and thoroughly practised in this trade, I know either of a picture, a

book, or a speech quite securely, whether it is good or not, as a cheesemonger knows cheese, and I have not the least mind to try to make wise men out of fools, or silk purses out of sows' ears; but my one swift business is to brand them of base quality and get them out of the way, and I do not care a cobweb's weight whether I hurt the followers of these men or not—totally ignoring them and caring only to get the facts concerning the men themselves fairly rounded and stated for the people whom I have real power to teach. And for qualification of statement there is neither time nor need. Of course there are few writers capable of obtaining any public attention who have not some day or other said something rational; and many of the fool-hesht of them are the amiablest, and have all sorts of minor qualities of most recommendable character—propriety of diction, suavity of temper, benevolence of disposition, wide acquaintance with literature, and what not. But the one thing I have to assert concerning them is that they are men of eternally worthless intellectual quality, who never ought to have spoken a word in this world, or to have been heard in it out of their family circles; and whose books are merely so much floating fog-bank, which the first breath of sound public health and sense will blow back into its native ditches forever.”

“There are some great men,” says Coleridge, “who actually flatter themselves that they abhor all egotism, and never betray it in their writings or discourse. But watch them narrowly, and in the greater number of cases you will find their thoughts and feelings and mode of expression saturated with the passion of *contempt, which is the concentrated vinegar of egotism.*”

The same author makes frequent reference to diseased forms of egotism, which seemed to him a fascinating study. For instance:

There is one species of egotism which is truly disgusting; not that which leads us to communicate our feeling to others, but that which would reduce the feelings of others to an identity with our own.—*Preface to Poetical Works.*

For some mighty good sort of people too there is not seldom a sort of solemn saturnine, or, if you will, ursine vanity, that keeps itself alive by sucking the paws of its own self-importance. And as this high sense, or rather sensation, of their own value is for the most part grounded on negative qualities, so they have no better means of preserving the same but by negatives—that is, by not doing or saying anything that might be put down for fond, silly, or nonsensical: or (to use their own phrase) by never forgetting themselves, which some of their acquaintances are uncharitable enough to think the most worthless object they could be employed in remembering.—*The Improvisatore.*

Silence does not always mark wisdom. I was at dinner, some time ago, in company with a man who listened to me and said nothing for a long time; but he nodded his head, and I thought him intelligent. At length, toward the end of the dinner, some apple-dumplings were placed on the table, and my man had no sooner seen them than he burst forth with—"Them's the jockeys for me." I wish Spurzheim could have examined his head.—*Table Talk.*

Query, whether Celeridge would have been so ready to assume the man's intelligence if he had *shaken* his head.

**Talk of One's Self an Introduction to Conversation.**—Between strangers a frank and easy reference to one's own purposes and tastes is among the easiest approaches to conversation.

A lady by mentioning her own movements or arrangements, or by referring to any matter connected with herself and family, if not of too private a nature, gives a lead or opening to her visitor, and affords an opportunity for her to take up the thread of the discourse, and to carry it into wider channels, far beyond the range of the operas, the theatres, or the weather. And in proportion as the conversation diverges into friendly or domestic talk, so do the two ladies become more at ease with each other, gaining in a short time a clear insight into each other's characters and pursuits.—*Society Small Talk.*

It is often assumed that reticence commands respect.

It is in vain to point out that the silent fool often passes for a man of wit, because the fool who has wit enough to know this and act accordingly is not properly a fool. Were he a fool he would not keep silence. The negroes attribute this wisdom to the chimpanzee, who, they say, is a man, but will not speak lest he should be made to work.

Silent people get through the world as well as their talkative neighbors; every one talks for them; their nod is interpreted where another man would have to make a speech; and every one is willing to excuse them as the sailor excused his parrot, for, if they do not speak, they think the more. Foote, the actor, boasted



of his horse that it could stand still faster than some horses could trot ; and the silent man is often enabled, by the value attached to his rare utterances, to say more by his silence than a voluble talker by a string of phrases.—*Saturday Review*.

Is it true that people of reserved disposition are so often misunderstood as they are supposed to be? It seems to me that certain persons of a frank and impulsive temper are quite as apt to be misinterpreted. The common error of giving reserved persons insufficient credit for feeling, because of their lack of demonstration, is an error into which only the duller sort of observers fall ; but keener-sighted ones often make the opposite mistake, and cherish the belief that the less they display the fuller and deeper its sources must be. This is far from being invariably the truth. It appears to me that if reserved folk are misconceived it is in a manner favorable to their character and intellect, and whatever opinions may be expressed about them are commonly accompanied with the acknowledgment that they are opinions only, for when a man is not outspoken about himself we may hold what notion we choose about him ; but we cannot help knowing that the notion is something of our own construction, based on no real knowledge. On the other hand, when a person is in the habit of talking freely, is not chary of his opinion and even reveals something of his personal tastes, habits, and feelings, it is natural enough for those who hear him to suppose themselves capable of estimating him. Yet this very frankness is what misleads ; we are not aware how much is kept back by these apparently communicative people—much that might modify or alter our notions of them. They show us a good deal of themselves and we think we know all ; they have a need of venting themselves and begin to speak their thoughts aloud ; yet they are sometimes very sensitive to misconception or possible ridicule, and at the slightest suspicion of either hasten to shut the half-opened door of their hearts and withdraw their real selves from our view. An impulsive person is generally impressionable and easily affected by the personality of others ; consciously or unconsciously he adapts himself to those he is in contact with, and shows to different persons different sides of himself, so that if an opinion were asked for, no two of his acquaintances, perhaps, would agree in their impressions. Of course he is himself to each and all, but not the whole of himself.

Reserve sometimes proceeds from a shy and timid sensitiveness, which makes no appeal for appreciation and sympathy, not daring to run the risk of meeting coldness and rebuff ; but reserved persons, as a rule, enjoy a most comfortable self-poise and independence of the good or ill opinion of others. It is the persons of frank, impulsive temperament who are the real unfortunates : they go through a good deal of experience before they learn the wisdom of keeping themselves to themselves, and after learning it are sometimes unlucky enough to forget it at the wrong moment.—*Atlantic Monthly*.

#### SUGGESTIONS.

Applying to this subject the general principle of conversation that our first object should be to entertain our companion, not to exalt ourselves, we observe :

1. *Reference to One's Self Should Never be Obtruded.*  
—To boast of one's position, connections, achievements,

sentiments is to lower by comparison the corresponding possessions of our comrade, and thus to render him uncomfortable. It is for this reason that a vaunting tale so often elicits from the hearer a story yet more marvellous, so that boasting leads to lying.

The discomfort is heightened as the thing exulted in is beyond the reach of one's companion. To boast of health in presence of an invalid, of strength to a cripple, of wealth to a pauper, of education to the illiterate, of social distinction to those who get no invitations, is as stupid as it is unkind, for whatever grudging acknowledgment may be granted the fact, is lost in resentment at the lack of consideration.

A man with more money than manners paused to talk with a laborer hoeing in his garden.

"Well, Pat," he began, "it's good to be rich, isn't it?"

"Yis, sorr."

"I am rich, very rich, Pat."

"Yis, sorr."

"I own lands, and houses, and bonds, and stocks, and—and—and—"

"Yis, sorr."

"And what is there, Pat, that I haven't got?"

"Not a spick o' since, sorr;" and shouldering his hoe Pat marched off in search of a less conceited employer.

On the other hand, no reluctance should be shown in coming forward when we can add to the pleasure of others. One must trust to his judgment to determine when he can contribute most to the general enjoyment by remaining in the back-ground and when by taking the lead.

A moderate musician, in whom it would be intolerable conceit to play before a cultured audience, may add intensely to the enjoyment of a country farm-house, and would show as much egotism in declining to play in the latter case as he would in offering to play in the former. There may be times when he knows himself unfitted to appear and yet where the demand that he shall

do so is so persistent that it is less egotistical for him to accept and do the best he can, knowing he must fail, than to delay the entertainment of the company while his hostess, injudiciously kind, refuses to yield to his protests. This is one of the instances where one is called upon deliberately to sacrifice one's self and to accept the unjust verdict of pretension, because to inflict poor music upon a company for five minutes will annoy them less than to listen for half an hour to one's reason for not trying. In all such cases the man who systematically regards not his own pleasure or reputation, but the gratification of the company, will seldom go astray. If occasionally misunderstood, eventually his unselfishness will be recognized.

2. *Statements of Fact Should be Rigorously Accurate.*

—In the popular mind exaggeration is so associated with boasting that in referring to ourselves we should be careful rather to diminish than to enlarge the statements of fact. So alert is the listener to detect exaggeration that he is quite likely some time to compare the fact with our statement of it. To find that we have claimed less than was really true will gratify him the more because this so seldom happens, while to discover that even in unessential particulars we have rounded out the narrative will inspire mistrust of all we have said.

Many persons acquire a gay habit of merry boasting, or of humorous gasconading—so called from the Gascons, a brave and talented people, who, however, utterly destroy all respect for their real merit by their habits of vaunting. He who would avoid vanity should have absolutely nothing to do with it—not even to burlesque it. Self is our most insidious foe, and he who boasts in fun will soon find earnest thoughts gliding into the current of his jests. In short, *avoid everything which may suggest, however remotely, to those with whom you converse the suspicion that you think of the effect you produce.*—*Art of Conversation.*

3. *Reference to One's Self Should Cease the Moment It Becomes Wearisome.*—There are persons so ill-bred as to

persist in asking questions about one's private affairs and who yet, when one in sheer good nature begins to answer, relapse into dreamy indifference. There are others who by any reference to one's self are instantly stimulated to interrupt by corresponding reminiscences and confessions. There are frequent occasions when one has been led, wisely or weakly, into self-revelment, and suddenly discovers that what he says is heard reluctantly. No rule is more imperative than that such reference to one's self should instantly cease, not only out of regard to the wishes of one's companion, but out of respect for one's own dignity. There are no moments in life more precious than when one talks with a tried friend of his life within. But such talk should be only between tried friends, and only in moments of confidence and sympathy. It is not to Harry Foker that Guy Warrington tells his story, but to Arthur Pendennis, and to Arthur Pendennis only when a crisis in his life makes the story solemn to him.

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### TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

Distinguished from self-conceit and vanity, p. 138.

Reference to one's self natural and interesting, p. 140.

But disagreeable when to an imaginary self, p. 141.

Egotism not eradicated by silence, p. 142.

Talk of one's self an easy introduction to conversation, p. 145.

### SUGGESTIONS.

Reference to one's self should never be obtruded, p. 146.

Statements of fact should be rigidly accurate, p. 148.

Reference to one's self should cease as soon as wearisome, p. 148.

## SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Do you agree with Coleridge (page 131) ?

Do you think the writer in the *Atlantic Monthly* (page 146) right or wrong in thinking those of frank and impulsive temper as apt to be misunderstood as those of reserved disposition ?

What do you think of the following paragraph ?

“Moralists are fond of vaguely advising people to ‘be themselves’ and of assuring them that all is well so long as a man dares to be his own true self. The value of this counsel, of course, entirely depends on the sort of self with which each person happens to be endowed. Socrates, who knew a good deal about his own character, asserted that if he had been true to himself he would have been one of the greatest scoundrels in an age peculiarly fertile in unredeemed blackguards.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### ARTICULATION AND PRONUNCIATION.

On whatever subject and for whatever purpose a man speaks to his fellow-men, they will never listen to him with interest unless they can hear what he says; and that without effort. If his utterance is rapid and indistinct, no weight of his sentiments, no strength or smoothness of voice, no excellence of modulation, emphasis, or cadence, will enable him to speak so as to be heard with pleasure.—PORTER.

A sensible man has one mode of articulation, and one only, namely: always to pronounce his words in such a manner as to be readily understood, but never in such a manner as to excite remark.—LÉGOUVÉ.

**Definitions.**—*Articulation* is proper utterance of vocal elements. *Pronunciation* signifies utterance of words, that is, of combinations of vocal elements. *Distinctness* is a general habit of the voice, belonging to all its sounds, articulate or inarticulate, being not mere correctness, but a sort of compactness of utterance.

A good articulation consists in giving every letter in a syllable its due proportion of sound, according to the most approved custom of pronouncing it; and in making such a distinction between the syllables of which words are composed, that the ear shall, without difficulty, acknowledge their number, and perceive at once to which syllable each letter belongs.—SHERIDAN.

In just articulation, the words are not to be hurried over; nor precipitated syllable over syllable; nor, as it were, melted together into a mass of confusion. They should be neither abridged nor prolonged nor swallowed nor forced; they should not be trailed nor drawled nor let slip out carelessly, so as to drop unfinished. They are to be delivered out from the lips as beautiful coins, newly issued from the mint, deeply and accurately impressed, perfectly finished, neatly struck out by the proper organs, distinct, in due succession, and of due weight.—AUSTIN'S *Chironomica*.

It had an odd, promiscuous tone,  
 As if he had talked three parts in one;  
 Which made some think, when he did gabble,  
 They heard three laborers of Babel,  
 Or Cerberus himself pronounce  
 A *leash* of languages at once.—BUTLER.

Conversational speech is, in general, very slovenly. Could it be written down exactly as we hear it, the speaker would not recognize the unintelligible jargon. Thus :

Convsashnlspeech zngenlveslovnly.

This is not an exaggeration of the kind of utterance that passes current in social life. The chief element of distant audibility—throat-sound, or voice—is so curtailed and slurred out, that little more than mouth-actions remain.

The very reverse must be the relation of throat to mouth in oratorical speech. Consonants may be softened to any degree, but vowels must be given fully and with swelling clearness. Thus :

CONVERSASHUNAL SPEECH IS IN GENERAL VERY SLOVENLY.—BELL.

A speaker may possess a very intelligent apprehension of the pronunciation of words, and he may very perspicuously show this to his hearers by marking in some degree the proper points for accentuation which occur in the words which he utters. But if there be any natural or acquired defect in the organs of speech; for instance, if the voice be exceedingly unmanageable, or if the palate should be gone, a person in this condition, although he may indicate by a very feeble and imperfect accentuation of words that he possesses a due apprehension of the necessity of that quality in speaking, yet he cannot, owing to his poverty in the blessing of sound, give out the different syllables in the words which he utters with a distinct intonation; he cannot yield to each syllable and letter in the composition of a word that due degree of weight which will mark with distinctness and precision the divisions which exist in them, just as the transient pauses which occur between the notes delivered from a bell of a glassy intonation repeat the distincter existence of each sound which falls from it upon the ear. It may be said of a person whose voice does not come to the

aid of his understanding in the pronunciation of words, that he is a correct pronouncer, but not a perfect or just articulator, just as it may be said of a performer on the violin, who is a perfect master of the science but not of the sounds of music, that he is a correct but not a distinct musician.—MCQUEEN.

**Importance of Articulation.**—A good articulation is to the ear what a fair hand-writing or a fair type is to the eye. Who has not felt the perplexity of supplying a word torn away by the seal of a letter; or a dozen syllables of a book in as many lines, cut off by the carelessness of a binder? The same inconvenience is felt from a similar omission in spoken language; with this additional disadvantage, that we are not at liberty to stop and spell out the meaning by construction. . . . A man of indistinct utterance reads this sentence: "The magistrates ought to prove a declaration so publicly made." When I perceive that his habit is to strike only the accented syllable clearly, sliding over others, I do not know whether it is meant that they ought to prove the declaration, or to approve it, or reprove it,—for in either case he would speak only the syllable prove. Nor do I know whether the magistrates ought to do it, or the magistrate sought to do it.—PORTER.

**Difficulties of Articulation.**—I. The first and chief difficulty lies in the fact that articulation consists essentially in the consonant sounds, and that many of these are difficult of utterance. . . . It is evident to the slightest observation that the open vowels are uttered with ease and strength. On these public criers swell their notes to so great a compass.

II. A second difficulty arises from the immediate succession of the same or similar sounds.



Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone.  
 Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire.  
 The hosts still stood.  
 The battle lasts still.  
 Wastes and deserts—Waste sand deserts.  
 To obtain either—To obtain neither.  
 His cry moved me—His crime moved me.  
 He could pay nobody—He could pain nobody.

In the last example, grammar forbids a pause between *pain* and *nobody*, while orthoëpy demands one. But change the structure so as to render a pause proper after *pain*, and the difficulty vanishes:—thus, *Though he endured great pain, nobody pitied him.*

A serious man was never before guilty of such a series of fol-lies; in which every species of absurdity was accompanied by a specious gravity.

The duke paid the money due to the Jew before the dew was off the ground; and the Jew, having duly acknowledged it, said adieu to the duke forever.

III. A third difficulty arises from the influence of accent. The importance which this stress attaches to syllables on which it falls compels them to be spoken in a more full and deliberate manner than others. Hence if the recurrence of this stress is too close, it occasions heaviness in utterance; if too remote, indistinctness.

And ten low words oft creep in one dull line.

Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone.

Communicatively, authoritatively, terrestrial, reasonableness, disinterestedness.

IV. A fourth difficulty arises from a tendency of the organs to slide over unaccented vowels.—PORTER.

See the quotation from Bell, on page 152.

**Cautions in Articulation.**—I. In aiming to form a distinct articulation, take care not to form one that is measured and mechanical. Something of preciseness is very apt to appear at first, . . . but practice and perseverance will enable us to combine ease and fluency with clearness of utterance. The child, in passing from his spelling manner is ambitious to become a swift reader, and thus falls into a confusion of organs that is to be cured only by retracing the steps which produced it. The remedy, however, is no better than the fault, if it runs into a scan-ning, pe-dan-tic for-mal-i-ty, giving undue stress to particles and unaccented syllables; thus, "He is *the* man of all *the* world whom I rejoice to meet."

II. Let the close of sentences be spoken clearly, with sufficient strength and on the proper pitch to bring out the meaning completely. No part of a sentence is so important as the close, both in respect to sense and harmony.

III. Ascertain your own defects of articulation by the aid of some friend, and then devote a short time, steadily and daily, to correct them.—PORTER.

**Special Difficulties.**—I. *Consonants.*

When a child says "tum" for "come," and "tin" for "king," the correct articulation will be induced almost at the first trial by the simple expedient of holding down the forepart of the tongue with the finger. The effort to imitate the general effect will then force the back part of the tongue into action; and in a few days at most, the child will, without any assistance, form *k*, *g*, and *ng*, where before it could only utter *t*, *d*, and *n*.

The "shut" consonants (*p*, *t*, *k*, *b*, *d*, *g*.) are the most easily acquired, and children consequently pronounce *p* instead of the more difficult *f*, and *t* instead of *th*. A few moments devoted to amusing exercise will conquer this difficulty. Thus, tell the child to bite his lower lip, and blow, and he will form a tolerable *f* at once; or to bite his tongue and blow, and a passable *th* will be

the result. The sounds of *s* and *sh* are often for a long time confounded; also those of *s* and *th*. The sound of *s* will be obtained from *th* by drawing back—or, if assistance is needed, by pushing back—the tip of the tongue till it is free from the teeth. The teeth require to be very close for *s*, but there will be room to insert the edge of a paper-cutter to *play* the tongue into position.—BELL.

The lower classes of the French Canadians habitually confound the mutes *k* and *c*, in certain combinations, and say "mèkier," "moikié," for "mètier," "moitié." The double forms *nunctus* and *nuntius* and the like show that the Romans did the same thing, if, as has been supposed, their *c* had always the force of *k*. An extraordinary instance of this particular confusion occurs in the remarks on pronunciation prefixed to Webster's large Dictionary, printed in 1828. In that essay the lexicographer, whose most conspicuous defects were certainly not those of the ear, after having devoted a lifetime to the study of English orthoëpy and etymology, informs the student that "the letters *c*, answering to *k*, are pronounced as if written *t*; clear, clean, are pronounced *hear*, *lean*. *Cl* is pronounced *dl*; glory is pronounced *dglory*."—MARSH.

## II. How to roll one's r's.

The two letters *d* and *t*, formed at the end of the tongue, are easily and naturally pronounced by everybody. Talma's idea was to pronounce these two letters rapidly and alternately; as, *du tu du tu*, etc. Then by degrees joining *r* to them, he pronounced the new combination also rapidly and alternately, *dru tru dru tru*, etc. By this contrivance it struck him that he could fish up the letter *r* from the depths of the throat, where it seemed to prefer keeping itself; that he could compel it, as it were, to answer the call of its companions inviting it out to the dance. Imagine a young girl—excuse the oddness of the comparison—a timid, shrinking young girl, hiding herself in a corner of the ball-room, but called out by her companions, who drag her forcibly and merrily into the middle of the circling throng. Soon, however, one friend slips away, then another, and another, so that at last our modest, timid, shy last-comer finds herself unconsciously dancing, and dancing well, without the protection of any participating companions.

That is exactly what Talma did. He first dropped the *d* and then the *t*; instead of saying *dru tru dru tru*, he said *ru ru ru ru*, and kept on doing this so persistently that at last the *r*, having been well-accustomed to vibrate with the others, had no difficulty in vibrating all alone.—LEGOUVÉ.

III. *The Italian A.*

It may here be pertinently remarked that the pronunciation of *a* in such words as *glass*, *last*, *father*, and *pastor*, is a test of high culture. The tendency among uncultivated persons is to give *a* either the thick, throaty sound of *au* which I have endeavored to describe, or, oftenest, to give it the thin, flat sound which it has in *an*, *at*, and *anatomy*. Next to that tone of voice which, it would seem, is not to be acquired by any striving in adult years, and which indicates breeding rather than education, the full, free, unconscious utterance of the broad *ah* sound of *a* is the surest indication in speech of social culture which began at the cradle.—  
RICHARD GRANT WHITE.

IV. *The Letter H.*

'Twas whispered in heaven, 'twas muttered in hell,  
And echo caught faintly the sound as it fell;  
On the confines of earth 'twas permitted to rest,  
And the depths of the ocean its presence confess;  
'Twill be found in the spheres when 'tis riven asunder,  
Be seen in the lightning and heard in the thunder;  
'Twas allotted to man with his earliest breath,  
Attends at his birth, and awaits him at death;  
Presides o'er his happiness, honors, and health;  
Is the prop of his house and the end of his wealth.  
In the heaps of the miser 'tis hoarded with care,  
But is sure to be lost with his prodigal heir;  
It begins every hope, every wish it must bound;  
With the husbandman toils; with the monarch is crowned.  
Without it the soldier, the sailor may roam,  
But woe to the wretch who expels it from home!  
In the whispers of conscience its voice will be found,  
Nor e'en in the whirlwind of passion be drowned.  
'Twill soften the heart; though deaf be the ear,  
'Twill make it acutely and instantly hear;  
But in shade let it rest like a delicate flower;  
Oh! breathe on it softly—it dies in an hour.

—CATHARINE FANSHAWE.

The only four words in the English language beginning with *h* and not aspirated are, *hour*, *heir*, *honest* and *honor*, with their derivations. *Hostler* is often written *ostler*, but when it begins with *h*, it should be aspirated, as are "host," "hostelry," and "hotel." Sometimes "herb" and "humble" are not aspirated. We do as-

pirate "herbal," "herbarium," and "herbivorous." Humble should be aspirated. Moore wrote his line :

" A heart that is humble might hope for it here,"

in order to confound the cockneys, and so did Mrs. Crawford her line :

" The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill."

In *Punch*, the cockney says : "The best cure for the cholera is the open hair ; I do not mean the air of the ead, but the hair of the hatmosphere."

A bit of London *Fun* : "Have you any fresh eggs?" "Yes, mum, plenty ; them with the hen on 'em!" "With the hen on them?" "Yes, mum, we always puts a hen on our fresh eggs, to distinguish of 'em. Beg pardon, mum, don't think you understand. Hen, the letter, not 'en, the bird. Hen, for noo-laid, mum. Take a dozen, mum? Thank you!"

#### V. Nasal Tones.

The soft palate which hangs at the back of the mouth acts as a valve on the passage to the nose. When the top of the soft palate is arched backward from its point of junction with the hard palate, it covers the internal nasal aperture, and the breath passes altogether through the mouth. When the soft palate is relaxed and pendent from the edge of the hard palate, the breath passes partly through the nose and partly through the mouth ; and when the mouth-passage is closed (by means of the back of the tongue, as in *ng*, the forepart of the tongue, as in *n*, or the lips, as in *m*,) the breath passes altogether by the nose. A knowledge of these facts will enable any person to correct the habit of nasalizing vowels.

The chief difficulty lies in the recognition by the ear of pure oral and mixed nasal quality. The action of the soft palate may, however, be seen, by opening the mouth very wide in pronouncing the vowels *ah* and *aw*. Then, by pressing on the top of the soft palate with the thumb, or with the india-rubber end of a pencil, the internal nasal aperture will be covered, and the utterance of *ah* and *aw* will be purely oral. Repeat these vowels with and without the mechanical pressure, and after a few experiments the

ear will distinguish the difference between oral and nasal. Practice on other vowels, in forming which the soft palate cannot be seen, will soon develop a *feeling* of the difference.

But the readiest way to gain a perception of the denasalizing action of the soft palate will be by the following exercise :

Sound the consonants *m b* without separating the lips, as in pronouncing the word *ember*. The change from *m* to *b* is nothing more than the covering of the nasal aperture by the soft palate; and the change from *b* to *m* without separating the lips, as in the word *submit*, is merely the uncovering of the nasal aperture.—  
BELL.

### Legouvé's Infallible Rule.—

On the clearness of our pronunciation depends the clearness of our discourse. In fact too much cannot be said of good pronunciation. It is the main point in our delivery; on it depends the very life of our words.

The consonants are the solid framework of the word; they are its bones. From the consonants we can reconstruct the word itself, just as Cuvier used to reconstruct the animals.

It is the intimate union between the vowels and the consonants that constitutes pronunciation. There is no such thing as pronouncing a consonant by itself, and even the vowel, though it forms the sound that we emit, does not form the word that we pronounce.

As to the consonants, the art of pronouncing them perfectly is the art of articulating them perfectly. There is no art more useful, but it is one that is by no means easy of acquirement. Few people possess from nature perfect powers of articulation.

With some it is too strong, with others too weak, with many indistinct. These defects can be remedied by systematic labor, and by that alone. How? you naturally ask. Well, here is one way, very ingenious and effective, and yet extremely simple and eminently practicable.

You wish, let us suppose, to confide a secret to a friend; but you are afraid of being overheard, the door being open, and somebody listening in the next room. What would you do? Walk up to your friend and whisper the secret into his ear? Not at all.

You might be caught in the act, and so excite suspicion. What should you do? I will tell you, and in doing so I will quote the exact words of that master of masters, Regnier :

“You face your friend exactly, and pronouncing your words distinctly, but in an underbreath, you commission your articulations to convey them to your friend’s eyes rather than his ears, for he is as carefully watching how you speak as he is intently listening to what you say. Articulation here, having a double duty to perform, that of sound as well as its own peculiar function, is compelled as it were to dwell strongly on each syllable so as to land it safely within the intelligence of your hearer.”

This is an infallible means of correcting all the defects and faults of your articulation. It is at once an exercise and a test ; if you do not articulate well, your friend will not understand you. After a very few months’ steady practice at this exercise for a few hours a day, you will find that your most obdurate articulatory muscles become flexible as well as strong, that they rise elastically and respond harmoniously to every movement of the thought and to every difficulty of the pronunciation.—LEGOUVÉ.

**Practice in Articulation.**—Begin at the end of a line, sentence, or paragraph, so as to prevent the possibility of reading negligently ; then (1) articulate every element in every word, separately and very distinctly, throughout the line or sentence ; (2) enunciate every syllable of every word throughout the line or sentence clearly and exactly ; (3) pronounce every word in the same style ; (4) read the line or sentence from the beginning forward, with strict attention to the manner of pronouncing every word ; (5) read the whole line or sentence with an easy, fluent enunciation, paying strict attention to the expression of the meaning, but without losing correctness in the style of pronunciation.—MURDOCH.

**Exercises.**—

Beef-broth, three-sixths, literally literary, knitting-needle, quit quickly, such a sash, puff up the fop, a velvet weaver, a cut of

pumpkin, a knapsack strap, coop up the cook, a school coal-scuttle, veal and white wine vinegar, geese cackle and cattle low, cocks crow and crows caw, a shocking sottish set, she sells sea-shells, cloud-capped, laurel-wreath, linen lining, a comic mimic, rural railroad, Scotch thatch, statistics of sects, portly poultry, a wet white wafer, pick pepper peacock, I snuff shop snuff.—BELL.

Amidst the mists and coldest frosts,  
With barest wrists and stoutest boasts,  
He thrusts his fists against the posts,  
And still insists he sees the ghosts.

Crazy Craycroft caught a crate of crickled crabs ;  
A crate of crickled crabs Crazy Craycroft caught.  
If Crazy Craycroft caught a crate of crickled crabs,  
Where's the crate of crickled crabs Crazy Craycroft caught ?

Thou wreathed'st and muzzled'st the far-fetched ox, and imprisoned'st him in the volcanic Mexican mountain of Pop-o-cat-e-pet-l, in Co-to-pax-i.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers ; a peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked ?

Thou waff'd'st the rickety staff over the mountain-height cliffs, and clearly saw'st the full-orb'd moon.

When a twister twisting, would twist him a twist,  
For twisting a twist three twists he will twist,  
But if one of the twists untwists from the twist,  
The twist untwisting untwists the twist.

Robert Rowley rolled a round roll round ; a round roll Robert Rowley rolled round. Where rolled the round roll Robert Rowley rolled round ?

Theophilus Thistle, the successful thistle-sifter, in sifting a sieveful of thistles, thrust three thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb.

Peter Prangle, the prickly-pear picker, picked three pecks of prickly prangly pears from the prangly pear-trees on the pleasant prairies.

Shoes and socks shock Susan.



## PRONUNCIATION.

**Pronunciation** is made up of articulation and accentuation; when both are perfect, the individual has a correct and elegant pronunciation.—VANDENHOFF.

Lord Chatham kept a dictionary constantly within his reach (1) to insure to every word he uttered in debate a pronunciation of incontestable accuracy, and (2) to enable him to select those words which would best express the idea he wished to convey.

**Standards of Pronunciation.**—Walker recommends that the analogies and tendencies of the language should be studied, as the best guides in orthoëpy. He has justly censured Dr. Johnson's general rule, that "those are to be considered as the most elegant speakers who deviate least from the written words." If the learned lexicographer's principle were adopted, what strange changes in pronunciation would be required in reading the following sentences, in which none of the words printed in italics are sounded according to the spelling:

The *common usage* of English people in *talking their native tongue* proves that they do not trouble themselves as to the spelling of the words. It surely is an *evil custom*, and savors of *affectation* to talk otherwise than their fathers, mothers, brothers, and relations have talked. If the professors of colleges and other places of education would give their attention to the principles of *English pronunciation*, they would see reason not to sanction the fashion of pronouncing many common words in *unusual ways*—sounding the final syllables exactly as they are spelled in *evil, devil, heaven, leaven, heathen, even, reason, season, beacon, deacon, often, softly, etc., etc.*—PLUMPTRE.

**Dictionary Authority.**—When two or more pronunciations of a given word have equal authority, choice may be made between them on the grounds of analogy, derivation, perspicuity, and euphony; but as a general

rule the pronunciation of words should be determined by the dictionaries in commonest use, the compilers of which are quite as capable as the young student of weighing the various considerations which should lead to the preference of one pronunciation over another.

How impossible it is to adopt any other standard than recognized authority is shown by the following instances of the changes in the pronunciation of words produced by adding a single letter.

**B** makes a road broad, turns the ear into a bear, and Tom into a tomb.

**C** makes limb climb, hanged changed, a lever clever, and transports a lover to clover.

**D** turns a bear to beard, a crow to a crowd, and makes anger danger.

**F** turns lower regions to flower regions.

**G** changes a son to song, and makes one gone.

**H** changes eight into height.

**K** makes now know, and eyed keyed.

**L** transforms a pear into a pearl.

**N** turns a line into linen, a crow to a crown, and makes one none.

**P** metamorphoses lumber into plumber.

**S** turns even into seven, makes have shave, and word a sword, a pear a spear, makes slaughter of laughter, and curiously changes having a hoe into shaving a shoe.

**T** makes a bough bought, turns here into there, alters one to tone, changes ether to tether, and transforms the phrase "allow his own" into "tallow this town."

**W** does well: *e.g.*, hose are whose? are becomes ware, on won, omen women, so sow, vie view, an arm becomes warm, and a hat is turned into—what?

**Y** turns fur to fury, a man to many, to to toy, a rub to a ruby, ours to yours, and a lad to a lady.—PATTERSON.

**The Unpardonable Error** in pronunciation is obtrusively to pronounce differently a word which has just been uttered.

Among intimate friends discussion of each other's verbal errors may by agreement become pleasant and profitable. But one should not venture to take this liberty with a stranger or with older people; for,

I. There is no subject upon which persons are generally more sensitive than upon their use of language. Even scholars become acrimonious when their opinions on this subject are disputed, as witness the books of Richard Grant White, Fitzedward Hall, Dean Alford, G. Washington Moon, and others. The explanation of this peculiar bitterness seems to be that one's use of language depends upon his early associations, his "bringing up," so to speak; and hence to insinuate that one is unacquainted with prevailing usage in speech, is to imply that one is also unacquainted with prevailing usage in manners—in other words, that he is no gentleman.

II. So widely do authorities differ, that one must be a profound student of orthoëpy to feel secure in asserting that the pronunciation he hears is wrong.

Take the word *pronunciation* itself. Webster gives "pronunshashun," without hint of other usage, and one who had consulted only this dictionary might feel that any other pronunciation was erroneous. But Perry, Knowles, Smart, Craig, Cooley, Cull, and Wright all prefer "pronunseashun," while Sheridan makes it "pronunshashun." Plumptre, in his *King's College Lectures on Elocution*, says:

"The word *pronunciation* is smoother when the *c* is pronounced as *s*, not as *sh*, and the word pronounced as if written *pronunseashon*, not *pronunshashon*. The repetition of the hissing sound of the *sh* is unpleasant."

In face of this authority, while one has the right to prefer the *sh* sound, he would simply obtrude his ignorance if he called the *s* pronunciation wrong. The general rule should be, whenever one hears a word pronounced in an unaccustomed way, by a person likely to know about it, immediately to look it up in the best authorities at hand, so as to assure one's self about it. But if, as often happens, the person seems to be wrong, one need not correct him. The object of observing the pronunciation of others is to correct, not their usage but our own. That labor is well

bestowed which makes us sure that we can pronounce correctly the words we use. But correct pronunciation is a means, not an end. To be able to report of an eloquent sermon only that the preacher said na-tional instead of nash-onal, betrays the most insufferable pedantry.

A man asked whether he would have his fish *briled*, replied that he didn't care whether it was *briled* or *biled*, providing it was not *spiled*.

"Mr. Kemble," said George III., "will you obleege me with a pinch of your snuff?" "With pleasure, your Majesty; but it would become your royal lips better to say *oblige*."—GRAHAM.

Here it may be doubted whether the actor was following the usage of the day more accurately than the king.

Marsh says: "*Oblige*, for instance, in its complimentary sense, is a word recently introduced from France; for this is a meaning unknown to Shakspeare, and as a word of ceremonial phraseology it was first pronounced *obleege*, but it is now almost uniformly articulated with the English sound of *i* long."

**Proper Names.**—Names of persons and places depend for their pronunciation wholly upon local usage. The only caution to be observed is that where well-known geographical names have a recognized English as well as a local pronunciation, the former should be employed. One would make himself ridiculous by talking of *Paree* and *Baerleen*.

Indeed, a strict conformity to the native pronunciation of names belonging to languages whose orthographical system differs much from our own, is considered an offensive affectation, and a great British orator, who was as familiar with French as with English, is said to have been so scrupulous on this point that in his parliamentary speeches he habitually spoke of an important French port as *Bordeaux*.—MARSH.

**Exercises.**—Of late years unusual attention has been given to words usually mispronounced. Among the collocations of such words strung together into a sort of con-

nection, the following will be found useful, few persons being able to read them through without a blunder.

A sacrilegious son of Belial, who suffered from bronchitis, having exhausted his finances, in order to make good the deficit resolved to ally himself to a comely, lenient, and docile young lady of the Malay or Caucasian race. He accordingly purchased a caliope and coral necklace of a chameleon hue, and, securing a suite of rooms at a principal hotel, he engaged the head waiter as his coadjutor. He then dispatched a letter of the most unexceptionable calligraphy extant, inviting the young lady to a *matinée*. She revolted at the idea, refused to consider herself sacrificeable to his desires, and sent a polite note of refusal, on receiving which he procured a carbine and a bowie-knife, said that he would not now forge fetters hymeneal with the queen, went to an isolated spot, severed his jugular vein, and discharged the contents of his carbine into his abdomen. The débris was removed by the coroner.

An Indian, attracted by the aroma of the coffee and the broth arising from the bivouac, moving down the path met a bombastic bravo who was troubled with the bronchitis. The Indian being in *deshabille*, was treated with disdain by this blackguard, who called him a dog, and bade him with much vehemence and contumely to leave his domain, or he would demonstrate by his carbine the use of a coffin and cemetery. The Indian calmly surveyed the dimensions of his European opponent, and being sagacious and robust, and having all the combativeness of a combatant, shot this ruffian in the abdomen with an arrow.

A young patriot with a black moustache, coming from the museum, laughingly said, "Bravo! you should be nationally rewarded by receiving the right of franchise, for I witnessed the altercation, and the evidence is irrefragable and indisputable that you have removed a nauseous reptile. I now make this inquiry—will not the matrons in this country, and the patrons of our schools, inaugurate some system that will give an impetus to the interesting study of our language? If half the leisure moments were thus spent in lieu of reading some despicable romance, we should be wiser than we are."

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**PART III.**

**LETTER-WRITING**







## PART III.

### *LETTER-WRITING.*

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#### CHAPTER X.

##### KINDS OF LETTERS.

The post is the grand connecting link of all transactions, of all negotiations. Those who are absent by its means become present; it is the consolation of life.—VOLTAIRE.

**A Letter** is a written communication from one person to another.

An early settler had occasion to send an Indian to a neighbor upon an errand, and scribbled his communication upon a chip. Observing that the neighbor upon looking at the chip knew the errand upon which the Indian was sent, the Indian regarded the chip with reverence, and thereafter wore it as an amulet, calling it "the talking chip."

A *Circular Letter*, under guise of a personal communication, is yet written avowedly for publication. Criticisms, editorial articles, even entire novels are sometimes written in the form of letters; but the letter proper is a communication intended only for the person or persons addressed.

**Kinds of Letters.**—Letters are usually (1) of *Friendship*, (2) of *Courtesy*, (3) of *Business*, (4) to *Newspapers*.

**I. Letters of Friendship.**—Few duties are more imperative than to send frequent letters to near kindred from whom we are separated. The ties of family are absolute ; the son, the daughter, the sister, the brother, who are insensible to these ties, who do not recognize and accept them as binding, start in life with a serious defect in their natures, and with an almost insurmountable obstacle to the attainment of true manhood and womanhood. These relations are not only the first into which one enters, but they involve all that is fundamental in character. The circumstances are very rare that will excuse the young man or woman for any neglect of love and loyalty to parents and to brothers and sisters.

Yet as the members of a family separate to enter each his individual path in life, it too often happens that they grow away from one another. Each forms new associations, has new friends, new thoughts, new ideas. On special occasions the members of the family meet, are glad to see each other, enjoy one another so long as they feel interested in recalling old times or in satisfying their curiosity as to the material facts of each other's new surroundings. But when it comes to real conversation, to the interchange of predominant thoughts, to the real problems of the daily life of each, every meeting finds the play-fellows of boyhood more and more strangers in maturity. There remain respect, confidence, love which every year seems more and more traditional ; but of the communion, the mutual help of those early days, less and less is left ; the relation is rather of a tribe than of a family.

To some extent this mental separation is inevitable, but it may be partly escaped by frequent and familiar correspondence. The boy at college who writes every week to his mother of all that has most interested him, will avoid some things that otherwise might make him reluctant to meet that mother's glance. The young man who has just come from a farm to the city, will seem less a stranger to his little brothers and sisters when he returns for vacation, and will find his interest in the familiar scenes of boyhood far less diminished, if his letters home have been regular and full-

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hearted. The members of an affectionate family, all of whom are good letter-writers, will never grow very far apart.

It is therefore important that the habit of interchanging letters when separated should be an early and an accepted one. The boy's first visit away from home should inspire his first letter home. The girl at school should look upon every incident as an "item" for her next letter. When, one by one, the elder children leave their home altogether, it should be no slight element of their purposes for the future, that there shall be a weekly letter to the old folks at home.

This practice will naturally be extended to school-mates and other intimate friends. In youth the heart is exuberant, the senses are keen, the mind is active, and the hands are comparatively unoccupied. There are hours of musing, of contemplation, of reflection, of recalling events just past, when the enjoyment and the profit are doubled if one can share one's thoughts with an absent friend. If such a correspondence be frank, unassuming, and free from gushing sentimentality, it is an unsurpassed means of literary culture.

**What to Write.**—But what shall these letters contain? Verdant Green's friend Bouncer wrote regularly to his mother, and he wrote long letters, that contained a great deal of information. But his plan was to begin: "My dear mother, I hope you are well, as I am at this writing, and I should like a little money, as my expenses are very heavy. I will now resume my description of Oxford from the point where we last left off." Whereupon he proceeded to copy from the local guide-book as much as would fill the prescribed number of pages.

This style of composition was not fitted to promote a very confidential intimacy with his mother, or to lead on his part to any pronounced mental development; but after all it was a fair type of

much family correspondence. A letter which is half occupied with remarking that "I now take my pen in hand to write you a few words," and half with regretting that "I haven't any news to tell, but close, assuring you that I am well and hope this epistle will find you in the enjoyment of the same blessing," is not adapted to do much more than discharge a disagreeable duty in a disagreeable way. But surely members of the same family need never pad out four pages of commercial note with common-places.

**The Great Mistake** in writing friendly letters is to suppose that only the marvellous is worth writing about. It is the incidents of every-day life, the characteristic little acts and speeches of the members of the household, that one longs to hear about when away. The great events are told in the newspapers, but only the letter can so depict the minutiae of home-life as to put the reader back for the moment among the friends he has left behind.

"I am going to make a sort of promise to myself and to you," writes Mary Lamb to her that was afterward Mrs. Hazlitt, "that I will write you kind of journal-like letters of *the daily what-we-do matters.*"

#### SPECIMENS OF FAMILY LETTERS.

*Samuel Johnson to His Younger Sisters.*

June, 1848.

MY DEAR GIRLS:

I am ready to cry at not hearing from you. What are you doing? Are you not going to let me into any of your little pleasures or plans? My heart bounds with yours in your pleasant hopes, and my eye will see all beautiful things as though it were yours. Do let the words you would speak in your happiest moments, in all their freshness and liveliness, take the form of letters, and pass into my heart as though I were with you. And so I am with you where you call me.

What shall I tell you of? Flowers, birds, woods, walks, true, loving, sincere books—what? They are all around me here, and they are so deep in my love, and you seem so present to me, that I cannot describe them: for it seems as though you knew how they looked as well as I. Tell me how you imagine things look about me. Little Susan R— comes to my room every now and then early in the morning, to get me to go to ride with her mother. But I *must* see you in a letter soon, or I shall be miserable.

Your own,

S.

*Margaret Fuller Ossoli's Last Letter.*

FLORENCE, May 14, 1850.

DEAR MOTHER:

I will believe I shall be welcome with my treasures—my husband and child. For me, I long so much to see you! Should anything hinder our meeting on earth, think of your daughter as one who always wished, at least, to do her duty, and who always cherished you, according as her mind opened to discover excellence.

Give dear love, too, to my brothers; and first, to my eldest, faithful friend, Eugene; a sister's love to Ellen; love to all my kind, good aunts, and to my dear cousin E—. God bless them!

I hope we shall be able to pass some time together, yet, in this world. But if God decrees otherwise—*Aere* and *Aereq/ter*, my dearest mother,

Your loving child,

MARGARET.

*William Henry to his Grandmother.*

MY DEAR GRANDMOTHER:

I guess you'll think 'tis funny getting another letter again from me so soon, but I'm in a hurry to have my father send me some money to have my skates mended; ask him if he won't please to send me thirty-three cents; and we two have made up again, and I thought you would like to know. It had been most three days, and we hadn't been anywhere together, or spoken hardly, and I hadn't looked him in the eye, or he me. Old Monder Bry he wanted to keep round me all the time, and have double-runner together. He knew we two hadn't been such chums as we used to be, so he came up to me and said, "Billy, I think that Dorry's a mean sort of a chap, don't you?"

"No, I don't," I said; "he don't know what 'tis to be mean!" For I wasn't going to have him coming any Jersey over me!

"O, you needn't be so spunky about it!" says he.

"I ain't spunky!" says I.

Then I went into the school-room to study over my Latin Grammar before school began, and sat down amongst the boys that were all crowding round the stove. And I was studying away, and didn't mind 'em fooling round me, for I'd lost one mark day before, and didn't mean to lose any more, for you know what my father promised me, if my next report improved much. And while I was sitting there, studying away, and drying my feet, for we'd been having darings, and W. B— he stumped me to jump on a place where 'twas cracking, and I went in over tops of boots and wet my feet sopping wet. And I didn't notice at first, for I wasn't looking round much, but looking straight down on my Latin Grammar, and didn't notice that 'most all the boys had gone out. Only about half a dozen left, and one of 'em was Dorry, and he sat to the right of me, about a yard off, studying his lesson. Then another boy went out, and then another, and by-and-by every one of them was gone, and left us two sitting there. O, we sat just as still! I kept my head down, and we made believe think of nothing but just the lesson. First thing I knew he moved, and I looked up, and there was Dorry looking me right in the eye! and held out his hand. "How are you, sweet William?" says he, and laughed some. Then I clapped my hand on his shoulder, "Old Dorrymas, how are you?" says I. And so you see, we got over it then, right away.

Dorry says he wasn't asleep that morning when I stood there, only making believe. Said he wished I'd pull, then he was going to pull too; and wouldn't that been a funny way to make up, pulling hair? He's had a letter from Tom Cuth, and he's got home, but is going away again, for he means to be a regular sailor and get to be captain of a great ship. He's coming here next week. I hope you won't forget that thirty-three. I'd just

as lives have fifty, and that would come better in the letter, don't you believe it would? That photograph aloon has ju-t gone by, and the boys are running down the road to chase it. When Dorry and I sat there by the stove, it made me remember what uncle Jacob said about our picture.

Your affectionate grandson,

WILLIAM HENRY.

**II. Letters of Courtesy.**—The line between letters of friendship and of courtesy cannot be drawn arbitrarily, since intimacy may clothe a note required by courtesy in a garb wholly unconventional. But, in general, it may be said that while letters of friendship originate in the impulse or habit of the writer, and depend for their form and nature upon his mood, letters of courtesy are demanded by the customs of society, not only at a particular time, but also of a particular character.

**a. Invitation.**—Formal notes of invitation should be simple, direct, and definite. Among the accepted forms are the following:

*Mrs. Arthur Sedgwick,  
At Home,  
Tuesday Evening, June 20, 1883,  
at eight o'clock.  
Park Street, near Elm.*

*Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Smith,  
invite you to meet their niece,  
Miss Gabriel Townsend,  
on Friday Evening, at six o'clock.  
247 East Genesee St.*

*Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Ritch,*  
*invite you to the*  
*Marriage of their Daughter*  
*Bertha*  
*to*  
*Eugene L. Waterbury,*  
*Thursday Evening, October Seventh,*  
*at eight o'clock.*  
*Trinity Church, Boston, Mass.*

*Reception,*  
*from nine till eleven.*  
*92 Shawmut Ave.*

*Mr. & Mrs. E. L. Waterbury,*  
*At Home,*  
*Thursdays in November.*  
*60 Belmont St.*

Less formal is the following from Charles Lamb:

My dear Sir: If you can come next Sunday we shall be glad to see you. Leg of Lamb, as before, hot at 4, and the heart of Lamb ever

Yours truly,

C. L.

30th March, 1821.

**b. Acceptance and Regrets.**—In all cases where one cannot accept an invitation, written regrets should be sent at once, that the hostess may know for how many she is to provide. Written acceptances need be sent only when there are appended to the invitation the letters “R. S. V.



P." (*Répondez, s'il vous plait*—"Reply, please.") The following forms will be a sufficient guide:

*Mr. Kingman accepts with pleasure Mrs. Sidgwick's kind invitation for Tuesday Evening.  
Everett House, June 14.*

*Miss Mansfield regrets that a previous engagement will deprive her of the pleasure of accepting Mr. and Mrs. Smith's invitation to meet Miss Townsend on Tuesday Evening.*

*134 Chestnut Street, June 10.*

**c. Congratulation and Condolence.**—Tidings of joy or bereavement require, from intimate friends at least, brief notes of sympathy. No form of correspondence affords a happier opportunity for revealing true friendship. He who can so put himself in the other's place as to know just what will most gratefully touch that other's heart, will win a place in that other's affection not easily attained.

To Novello, who had just lost a favorite child, Leigh Hunt wrote:

July —, 1820.

This comes from Leigh Hunt, merely to say that he thinks of his friend Vincent Novello, and to hope that, when he has vented his first natural feelings on the death of one so dear to him, he will think of others to whom he himself is dear, and let them see him as soon again and as cheerful again as possible.

**d. Introduction and Recommendation.**—

Persons of influence are overwhelmed with requests for letters of introduction and recommendation. So to phrase these letters as to satisfy the one applying, without exceeding the truth, or guaranteeing that of which one has no certainty, is no easy task.

*Caution in Giving References.*—Sanguine or unscrupulous persons sometimes give references to prominent persons whose permission they have not asked, in the hope either that the one they hope to influence will be satisfied by the name, without applying for information; or that if information is asked, a good-humored report will be given. This is neither honorable nor wise.

The following letter was received by a Western board of education, from a gentleman to whom a candidate for the office of Superintendent had "referred:"

"Dear Sir: Your letter of the 8th places me in a delicate position. I cannot say anything good of Mr. ———, and I do not wish to say anything bad of him which will prevent his leaving the State. I must therefore decline to express any opinion.

Yours truly, ———."

*Letter introducing Mr. Audubon to Lewis Cass.*

PHILADELPHIA, September 30, 1833.

MY DEAR GOVERNOR:

I do not know when I have done a more acceptable service to my feelings, nor when I have been just in a situation to afford as much gratification to yours, as in presenting to your notice, and private and official friendship, the bearer, Mr. Audubon. It were superfluous to tell you who he is; the whole world knows him and respects him, and no man in it has the heart to cherish or the head to appreciate him, and such a man, beyond the capacity of yourself.

Mr. Audubon makes no more of tracking it in all directions over this, and I may add, other countries, than a shot-star does in crossing the heavens. He goes after winged things, but sometimes needs the aid of at least a few feathers to assist him the better to fly. He means to coast it again round Florida—make a track through Arkansas—go up the Missouri—pass on to the Rocky Mountains, and thence to the Pacific. He will

require some of your official aid. I took an unmerited liberty with your name and readiness of purpose, and told him you were the *very man*, and I need not say how happy I shall be to learn that you have endorsed my promise and ratified it.

God bless you. In haste,

To the Hon. LEWIS CASS,

*Secretary of War,*

Washington City.

THOS. L. MCKENNEY.

**III. Letters of Business.**—It has been well said that the form of a business letter is best when it most clearly and quickly answers three questions: 1. Where is this letter from? 2. Whom is it from? 3. What does he want?

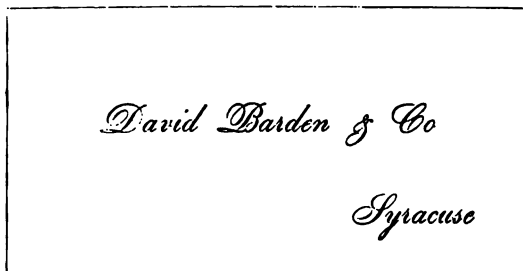
Business letters from purchasers may be divided into three classes:

*a. Letters of Inquiry. b. Orders. c. Remittances.*

*a. Letters of Inquiry.*—Miss Anna Louise Jones, teaching in the village of Centreville, Onondaga County, has some trouble with the parents of one of her pupils, and wants to inform herself as to her legal rights as a teacher. She remembers having seen a small book called *School Law*, or something like that, which is probably just what she wants; she thinks it is published in Syracuse, and presumes it is one of the *School Bulletin Publications*. She is not quite sure what the firm-name of the publishers is, but she thinks it is David Barden & Co., or something like that. There is nobody at hand from whom she can get fuller information. How shall she write her letter? If she is like many teachers we know, she will do it as follows:

*Centreville To David Barden & Co do  
you have School Law and how much is it  
A L Jones.*

Outside she will address the envelope :



#### CRITICISMS.

(1) To begin with the envelope, for unless that is properly addressed it makes no difference how the letter is written ; it will never reach the person addressed. For want of proper direction fifteen thousand letters a day are sent to the Dead Letter Office. Money is delayed or lost, appointments are missed, orders are unfilled, important tidings are withheld—all because addresses are not complete and distinct.

Now if Miss Jones were absolutely certain that the firm-name was *David Barden & Co.*, it would be necessary only to write that name distinctly, with the name of the city and State, as it rarely happens that two firms in the same place have precisely the same address.

But Miss Jones is by no means certain, and in fact she is entirely wrong. The firm-name as she saw it was *Davis, Bardeen & Co.*, and it has since become *C. W. Bardeen*. The envelope as addressed is quite unlikely to reach its destination. What should she have done ?

She should have made use of two facts she knew, (1) that the firm were publishers ; and (2) that their books were known as *The School Bulletin Publications*. These facts she should have indicated upon the envelope, as corrections to any error she might have made. If she was much in doubt about the latter fact, she might have put after that line a (?). Thus :

*David Barden & Co.,  
Publishers,  
Syracuse, N. Y.  
School Bulletin Publications (?)*

That letter would reach its destination, in spite of the error in the name. The general principle to be impressed as to supercriptions is this: *If you are in doubt as to the exact address, add any particulars you happen to know that may assist the postmaster in determining whom you mean.*

In particular, put on the business, and the street and number, whenever you know them or can easily ascertain them. This will almost absolutely prevent blunders, not only from errors of the writer, but from errors of the postman. When envelopes were addressed to Davis, Bardeen & Co., that firm frequently got letters addressed to Darius Baldwin, a capitalist boarding at the Burns Hotel. More than once these letters, opened carelessly with the rest of a mail, contained drafts for large amounts,—once for some five thousand dollars. One dislikes to have one's mail go thus astray, no matter into whose hands it may fall, and these letters would have gone to him straight if, instead of being addressed:

*Darius Baldwin,  
Syracuse, N. Y.*

they had been addressed:

*Darius Baldwin,  
Hotel Burns,  
Syracuse, N. Y.*

(2) Suppose the firm had got the letter, it would still have been useless to Miss Jones, because she does not give her post-office address. She heads the letter "Centreville," but Centreville is the name only of the *village* where she lives; the *post-office* is Plank Road. An answer to that letter would be directed to Centreville, Allegany Co., N. Y., and as it would be simply a marked price-list under a one-cent stamp, it would not be returned, and it would be supposed that Miss Jones had received it. If she had appended her address to her signature, or if, forgetting that the post-office was different, she had yet added the county, the firm would have known the post-office, and this error would have been avoided. Large firms always have quite an amount in small sums credited to people who have sent money and signed their letters, but have omitted to name their post-offices. Sometimes the post-office is named and the letter unsigned. In that case the letter may be returned to the postmaster, who discovers the writer by posting up the letter, or some such means, if he does not recognize the hand-writing. But when the post-office is not given and the name is strange, it is simply impossible to answer the letter in any way.

The principle involved is so simple that to reiterate it seems like reminding a young lady to wash her face. And yet we must impress it as very important to every one who writes a business letter, to *look it over before sending, and be sure the post-office address is given in full.*

(3) Even if the firm had known her post-office, it is doubtful if a reply would have reached Miss Jones, for her signature is usually recognized as the signature of a man: and unless the hand-writing were unmistakably feminine (and that means a great deal; very little hand-writing is *unmistakably* either male or female), the firm would address the reply to

*A. L. Jones,*

*Plank Road,*

*Oncodaga Co.*

*A. P. Y.*

Most post-offices have a men's delivery and a women's delivery, and this envelope would be put into the men's delivery pigeon-

hole. When Miss Jones called for her letter the postmaster would look for it in the women's delivery, and would not find it.

The best way for Miss Jones to sign her name is

*Anna L. Jones.*

But if for any reason she does not wish to give more than her initials, she should either subscribe herself

*(Miss) A. L. Jones ;*

or, if she dislikes to do this, she should append to the letter :

*Please address,*

*Miss A. L. Jones,  
Plank Road,  
Onondaga Co.,  
N. Y.*

Indeed the last form has many advantages over any other, and is the least liable to mistakes of any kind. But the principle involved is : Unless the address is elsewhere given in full, an unmarried lady's signature should indicate her sex, either by writing one given name in full, or by prefixing (*Miss*) ; and a married lady's signature should be prefixed by (*Mrs.*).

(4) If all these corrections had been made in Miss Jones's letter, she would have got the information desired, for she would have received a circular with description and price of *Common School Law for Common School Teachers*. But the firm would still have felt somewhat uncertain as to whether that was just what she wanted, as the abrupt questions she asks might refer to the new *Code of Public Instruction*, of which the price is three dollars. If the firm knew the writer to be a woman, it might judge that she was a teacher, and that the *Common School Law* would cover all

points in which she was likely to be interested. But if the writer was supposed to be a man, he might be a trustee, and the question might be as to district boundaries, or the collection of taxes, as to which the *Common School Law* has nothing to say.

So when Miss Jones was so uncertain as to the title of the book, she would have done well to state what she wanted it for, and to give some idea as to its size and appearance. She happened to hit so near the title, that the firm publishing the book would recognize it; but the letter would have been unintelligible to the larger New York book houses.

Put into proper shape and written with courtesy, Miss Jones's letter might have read:

*Plank Road, Onondaga Co., N<sup>o</sup>. Y.*

*Aug. 30, 1884.*

*David Barden & Co.,*

*Syracuse, N<sup>o</sup>. Y.*

*Gentlemen,*

*I want to buy a small book I have somewhere seen, that tells what are the legal rights of teachers, especially when any disputes arise with parents. If I remember aright it was published by you, and at any rate I presume you can tell me about it. If you can furnish it, and will write me what the price is, I will send for it at once.*

*Yours respectfully,*

*Anna L. Jones.*



*b. Orders.*—Miss Jones, getting a marked circular which gives the name and price of the book, decides to order it. She follows precedents if she puts a silver half-dollar into the following letter :

*Centreville C W Bardeen*  
*here is half a dollar send the book right away*  
*At L Jones.*

#### CRITICISMS.

(1.) In the first place, her letter containing the silver half-dollar comes with "DUE TWO CENTS" on it. A half-dollar weighs 192.9 grains, while a half-ounce contains only 218.75 grains, leaving twenty-five grains for the writing-paper, envelope, and the sheet of brown paper in which the half-dollar is wrapped. *Please don't send silver in letters : but if you do, be sure to prepay all the postage.*

Yet there is a worse fault than to send silver not fully prepaid, or even postage-stamps, which many firms refuse. That is, to send a check for a small amount on a local bank. Some persons affect this way of sending money, partly because it saves them from the risk of loss in the mails, partly because it saves trouble, and partly because it shows that they keep a bank account. But it costs the firm receiving it from ten to twenty-five cents to collect it, and though a firm may submit to the imposition, it will not feel kindly toward the person who attempts it. A check before us, sent from Syracuse to Dawn, Ohio, bears upon the back the following endorsements :

(1) "Pay to order of Shelley & Merts, A. P. Southwick"; (2) "Pay to order of Frames, Kunich & Co., Shelley & Merts"; (3) Pay to the order of G. B. Harman, Cash. Frames, Kunich & Co."; (4) "Pay D. Clarke or order, for collection, account of City National Bank, Dayton, Ohio, G. B. Harman, Cashier"; (5) "For collection, account American Exchange B'k, New York, D. Clarke, Cashier"; (6) "The Robert Gere Bank, Syracuse, N. Y., July 21, 1883, Paid"; (7) "State Bank, Syracuse, July 24, 1883, C 23."

All these endorsements preceded the collection of the check. Of course, the money was returned through as many hands and after several days' delay.

In other words, this check passed through the hands of six banks, every one of which had to make a record of it. Suppose it was for fifty cents, or any small amount, you may be sure every bank clerk that entered the name of the check would curl his lip with contempt for his ignorance of business principles. If one keeps a bank account one can get from a bank a draft on a New York bank which will be good anywhere for

its face-value. But to send away from home a check on a local bank for less than ten dollars is to presume unwarrantably upon the good-nature of every person who has to handle it.

(2.) In the second place, the letter being unregistered was very likely to be stolen. It costs ten cents to register a letter, and that seems a heavy rate of insurance to pay on fifty cents. Yet the letter containing money should be registered **EVERY TIME**, unless the money is sent as a draft or a money-order. Think how many hands a letter passes through before it reaches its destination, and every hand feels that half dollar—a skilful hand would feel a bill, however carefully inserted. It is impossible for business firms to hold themselves responsible for money sent in unregistered letters, and they absolutely refuse to do so. So long as a ten-cent postage stamp will secure perfect safety, customers must blame themselves if they lose their remittances by failing to register their letters. In fact the new forms of money-orders, and the express money-orders recently introduced, make the expense still less, so that small sums may be sent safely, even for a fee of three cents.

(3.) But if the firm has received the money, and if it credit it as fifty cents (though it really brings in only forty-eight), what is it to send? "The book!" If Miss Jones were an only correspondent, or if the firm published but one book, this might be easy. But most firms publish many books, and such letters of inquiry as Miss Jones's, come in by scores. On receipt of such a letter as that, a clerk would go back over the correspondence of the past few days and hunt up Miss Jones's first letter. Probably he would send her the book she wanted, but only after wasting a half-hour to atone for her negligence.

*✎ Every business letter should be complete in itself.*

Having ascertained the name and price of the book she wanted, Miss Jones should have ordered it as though there had been no previous correspondence. In fact the letter would usually go to a wholly different clerk, who would have no occasion to know that any other letter had been received.

(4.) To say, "Send the book right away" is absolute tautology. Of course a business house fills orders promptly as a matter of routine, and regards a request like that as simple evidence of inexperience.

Yet it may be of special importance that Miss Jones get the book by return mail. In that case she should state why. It sometimes happens that a firm is out of a particular book, and waiting for a new edition. Under ordinary circumstances an order would be delayed till the new edition came in. But if Miss Jones explained that a matter in which she was interested was to be brought before the trustees on Tuesday night, and she must have the book beforehand, the firm would search every library in the city before it would let her miss receiving the book in time. "Please send right away," is a phrase so common as to be meaningless, but a real necessity for haste will lead any respectable firm to put itself to inconvenience to accommodate a customer.

Corrected, then, Miss Jones's letter would read something as follows :

*Plank Road, Onondaga Co., N. Y.*

*Aug. 31, 1884.*

*C. W. Bardeen,*

*Syracuse, N. Y.*

*Sir, I enclose in this registered letter fifty cents, for which please send me Bardeen's Common School Law.*

*As a matter in which I am interested is to be decided on Friday night, I shall feel obliged if you will be sure that the book is sent at once.*

*Yours respectfully,*

*Anna L. Jones.*

*c. Remittances.*—Looking at the catalogue of books sent with the Common School Law, Miss Jones thinks she would like a “Regents’ Grammar and Key,” but she is not sure whether Clark’s is among the grammars to which reference is made. So she writes that she would like the book *if* this grammar is on the list of those referred to; if it is, and the firm will send the book, she will forward the money at once. The firm sends the book with bill, and presently gets this letter:

*Centreville enclosed find one dollar for  
Regents grammar key A L Jones.*

#### CRITICISMS.

(1.) She violates the rule given above, that every business letter should be complete in itself, for she assumes that it will be remembered that she ordered the book, that it was sent to her, and that this is to pay for it.

But the firm remembers nothing about A. L. Jones. So far as answering letters is concerned, the firm employs several clerks, one entering orders, another posting up remittances, another answering inquiries, and each knowing little about the work done by the others.

When the morning mail is opened, this seems to be an order, and is referred to the order clerk. He enters the order and passes it on to the shipping-clerk. Miss Jones is astonished to get another copy of the “Regents’ Grammar and Key.” If she does not write and ask why, or return it, she is presently astonished to get a bill for the first one, that she supposed she had paid for. Then she gets angry, and writes that the firm evidently intends to cheat her, and perhaps half-a-dozen letters pass before the blunder is detected and made right at the office of the firm.

All this would have been avoided had Miss Jones written :

*Plank Road, Onondaga Co., N<sup>Y</sup>.*

*September 1, 1884.*

*C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, N<sup>Y</sup>.*

*Sir, I send enclosed money-order for one dollar, to pay the bill for the Regent's Grammar and Key which I received yesterday.*

*Thanking you for sending it without waiting for the money, I am,*

*Yours respectfully,*

*Anna L. Jones.*

How simple all these details are! Yet not a day passes that business firms do not receive letters with all the faults we have pointed out. There is no hint here which has not come from a long experience in trying to find out the wants of teachers who have never learned to express themselves. Let every one who reads this long but not needlessly lengthened article be sure that none of the blunders here mentioned are found in his letters.—*The School Bulletin.*

**Definite Purpose.**—It is not necessary in a general discussion of the subject, to give the various formulas into which custom has moulded the letters most used in business, such as announcements, solicitations, letters of credit, notices of draft, and the like. But it is to be kept in mind that a business letter is pre-eminently a letter with a purpose: that enough is to be said to express that purpose clearly, in courteous language, but that not one

unnecessary word should be added. Many firms receive two thousand letters a day; and no business men have time to wade through four pages of superfluous information to get at the one significant sentence.

**iv. Newspaper Letters.**—First ventures in authorship are usually in the line of letters to local newspapers.

Juvenis Jones goes to a celebration in a neighboring city, and feels like "writing it up" for his neighbors. So he sidles into the editor's office, remarking, with a furtive glance, that he has been at Rochester attending the firemen's parade, and that maybe he could give the editor a point or two, if it was worth while to say anything about it in the *Palladium*.

He is gratified to see how readily the editor accepts his services, and goes home filled with zeal to prepare a stunning report. He sits up all night, elaborates his recollections into ornate paragraphs, copies a dozen foolscap pages because of a blot on one of them, and goes to sleep with inky fingers and dreams of fame.

Next morning he walks with an important air into the sanctum, and hands the manuscript to the editor, remarking that he just sat down and scribbled it off, but hopes it will answer for a hasty sketch. The editor looks at it critically, sees that as it stands it would fill three columns, but that with the introduction and conclusion and moralizing omitted, the description itself will come into a dozen inches, thanks the aspiring author, bows him out, and runs a blue lead pencil through just the part which had cost nearly all the labor.

Mr. Jones loiters about the office with ill-concealed impatience, and in his joy to find something of his own actually in type, forgets to mourn over the elaborate paragraphs that have vanished. He now considers himself attached to the staff of the newspaper, and boldly offers to report every affair of consequence in the neighborhood. The editor, himself no Washington Irving, gladly accepts the enthusiastic labor thus offered without charge, and, carefully eliminating all expressions of opinion or thought, prints week after week accounts of weddings and picnics, which the young man pastes away in a scrap-book, labelled on the outside, "The Complete

Works of Juvenis Jones. Vol. I." Perhaps he becomes local correspondent of a city daily, paid by a free copy of the weekly edition, and by a stock of envelopes to enclose his contributions, bearing outside the printed address of the newspaper. If so, he need be rather more than human not to grow haughty and supercilious. He may try to be kind to those about him ; but as he deposits a communication which he knows will be printed next morning in an influential newspaper, he can but feel the superiority which accompanies the reflection that the safety and happiness of his neighbors are largely in his own hands. It is indeed a fearful responsibility, but if he is conscientious, he resolves to be just and fear not. Far-reaching as is his power, he will not clog the wheels of the universe ; vice shall still be thwarted, and modest virtue shall be rewarded.

**Suggestions.**—While the letters printed by local newspapers do not command much literary talent, they offer a useful field to young persons ambitious to become writers. Practice is of all things most essential, and one is often stimulated to effort by feeling that what one writes will certainly be printed. This assurance may be pretty confidently relied upon by those who follow these directions.

*a. Have Something to Tell.*—Newspaper letters should be above all things *gossipy*. The public cares nothing for your general reflections on manners, science, and political economy, but will be glad to read vivacious descriptions of what you have seen and heard. To excel as a correspondent one must have sharp eyes, quick ears, and an ever-ready note-book.

Whether it is something to tell depends not upon whether it interests you, but upon whether it is likely to interest the readers of the newspaper you are writing to. That Deacon Smith is repairing his stone fence, or that Mrs. Jackson's baby has the measles, are facts momentous to the households concerned, without being of the least import to the multitude who read the paper.

*b. Begin Telling it at Once.*—Newspaper readers have no time to waste on introductions. Your excuse for occupying space is

that you have something to tell, and you must prove that you have by telling it from the start. The more abrupt its opening, the more likely the letter is to be read. If you can think of any incident typical of the whole affair, or any witty remark that summarizes it, use something of that sort. If not, you can at least be frank and straightforward, telling your story simply, and beginning where the story began.

As we correct this proof we find the following in the morning newspaper :

"POMPEY, August 8.—Again are we reminded that life is but the gate to eternity. The Angel of Death, sometimes called the 'King of Terrors,' has this time summoned three old residents of Pompey to that bourne whence no traveller returns. The first was," etc.

Contrast with this introduction the following from the *Atlanta Constitution* :

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8.—"You will now witness," said Emory Speer, as with Mr. Harrington, of Columbus, we filed into the Federal court-room in this city, "the most famous, and, in many respects, the most interesting trial on record."

The court-room was packed. As we entered the voice of the sheriff was heard ordering the doors closed, as there was standing room for no more people in the court-room. The crowd was of a better class than I had expected to find. The most elegant women and men of position and character made up the staple, with here and there a strip of rough people, admitted by the connivance of some doorkeeper or subordinate. . . .

"If ever I saw a hanging jury," said Speer, "that is one. I have studied it carefully, and in the light of considerable experience, I think it is the most determined jury I ever saw. Along either line there is not a face that promises the least sort of sentiment or qualmsiness. Even the third juror in the front row, who goes to dozing in the first half hour, and sleeps peacefully until the bailiff rouses him at the close of the session, wakes with a vigor that ill-betides the prisoner. It is rumored that some of the jurors have hereditary insanity in their families, and that this may cause a mistrial. This is hardly probable, though. Guiteau is before a hanging jury, if ever any man was." Etc.

c. *Tell it Compactly.*—This is done, not by vaguely mentioning a dozen things, but by minutely describing the one of the dozen which, fairly grasped, will suggest all the rest. A single incident in detail, a bit of conversation word for word, each typical of the time and place, will make the scene more real than any amount of generalizing. Don't talk about "A portly gentleman from an interior village," but give his name. Be direct, definite, epigrammatic, and let your reader draw his own conclusions.

d. *Stop when you are Through Telling It.*—If you have a specially characteristic incident, save it for the last, and let your reader



close with a smack of his lips. But if you can't be witty or startling, you can at least be simple, and stop when the story stops.

*e. Read over your Manuscript.*—In the zeal of accomplishment, young writers are apt to feel an impulse, as they reach the last page, to do up the manuscript at once and send it off without looking it over. This is an unpardonable mistake. The re-reading and re-writing are the most valuable part of this practice. The first draft should be composed rapidly, without too much search for each expression, but with the main purpose to reproduce the scene as vividly as possible. But in revision, each sentence should be weighed and turned. Does it express my meaning unmistakably? Is it forcible? Is this just the right word? Would that be regarded as a low or slang expression? If one hopes some time to write better than local letters, one must write these local letters with all possible care.

Especially is it important to *chop up the paragraphs*. The reader's attention is attracted by open spaces. One of the charms of rapid dialogue in print is that the eye can grasp a sentence or two at a glance, without boring into a solid paragraph. For this as well as other reasons, preference should be given to dialogue over description. In general, seek to be crisp, as well as compact.

*f. Don't forget* to write (1) with thoroughly *black ink*, (2) on one side (3) of small pages, commercial note preferred, (4) carefully numbered, and (5) never rolled.

**The Possibilities** of newspaper correspondence are daily widening. Already some of the best and the best-paid literary work in the world appears as letters in the great dailies. No kind of writing is more eagerly sought for or more liberally rewarded than the gathering of news. He who has learned what is news, how to get it, and how to tell it, may achieve less literary fame than Homer, but he will not need to beg in seven cities for bread.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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What to write, p. 173.

The great mistake, p. 174.

II. Courtesy, p. 174.

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b. Acceptance and regrets, p. 177.

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f. Don't forget: (1) black ink, (2) one side, (3) small pages,  
(4) numbered, (5) not rolled, p. 194.

## CHAPTER XI.

### GENERAL RULES FOR LETTER-WRITING.

**a. Answer Promptly.**—Letters worthy to be answered at all deserve to be answered promptly; not necessarily at once, but at the first suitable opportunity.

This is important to both correspondents. The original writer will take more interest in a reply that is received before the subjects of which he wrote have passed out of his mind; and the other will write a better reply while the stimulus of the original letter is still fresh. Many a young person has times when he "feels just like" writing a certain letter, and would have written an excellent one. But he is out of paper, or cannot find his ink, and delays writing till, weeks afterward, he is shamed into padding out four pages with a formal and utterly characterless answer.

In business, a prompt reply is imperative. To let lie unanswered, day after day, letters of proper inquiry, is an unpardonable breach of business etiquette.

Letters asking for information should always enclose a stamp for reply. Letters enclosing a stamp must be answered at once, even if one declines to give the information demanded, and if one merely encloses in the envelope the statement that one so declines to do.

**b. Write Frankly but Discreetly.**—The charm of a letter is its easy frankness, but one should never forget that it may constitute a permanent record. Many persons keep all letters received, and these documents

sometimes reappear unexpectedly and disastrously, years after it was supposed they were buried in oblivion. So one should be sure that expressions of affection are kept inside the boundary of gush, and that sentiment stops this side of sentimentality. Especially in matters of gossip should one be sure that only truth is told, and that it is so told as to do no injustice or unkindness, even though a third eye some time read the pages.

You ask for some of your late father's letters. I am sorry to say I have none to send you. Upon principle, I keep no letters except those on business. I have not a single letter from him, nor from any human being, in my possession.—*SYDNEY SMITH to R. Mackintosh.*

**c. Write Naturally and Directly.**—Don't say, "In the opinion of the undersigned," or "If your humble servant may be believed," when you mean "I think." Avoid all circumlocutory phrases. To struggle at a genuine idea which it seems difficult or even impossible adequately to express, is entirely allowable; but it is unpardonable to smother a common-place reflection under a mountain of laborious words.

Never try to write a long letter—never allow yourself, indeed, to write one, unless you have so much to say that you cannot help it. A long-winded letter is only more enduring than a long-winded talker, because you skip the letter, but the talker won't let you skip him. Say what you have to say as briefly as is consistent with saying it clearly, and avoid alike long words and long sentences. It is better to "say" than to "observe," to "talk" than to "converse," to "state" than to "formulate,"—in fine, short words and short sentences belong to letter-writing, which is nothing if not easy and crisp. First have something to say. If there is any occasion for a letter at all, that occasion is its subject. Say what you have to say, and be contented to stop when it is

said. If you have the good fortune to be witty or brilliant, or original in your way of looking at things, your letter will be clever ; but if you are none of these you can be prompt, brief, and courteous, and then you will have written the letter of a lady or a gentleman, if not of a Madame de Sévigné or a Horace Walpole.—  
LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

Depend upon it, my reader, that the straightforward and natural writer who frankly uses the first person singular, and says, "I think thus and thus," "I have seen so and so," is thinking of himself and his own personality a mighty deal less than the man who is always employing awkward and roundabout forms of expression to avoid the use of the obnoxious *I*. Every such periphrasis testifies unmistakably that the man was thinking of himself ; but the simple, natural writer, warm with his subject, eager to press his views upon his readers, uses the *I* without a thought of self, just because it is the shortest, most direct, and most natural way of expressing himself. The recollection of his own personality probably never crossed his mind during the composition of the paragraph from which an ill-set critic might pick out a score of *I*'s. To say, "It is submitted," instead of "I think," "It has been observed," instead of "I have seen," "the present writer," instead of "I," is much the more really egotistical. You use the readiest and most unaffected mode of speech to set out your thoughts of it. You have written *I* a dozen times, but you have not thought of yourself once.—*Fraser's Magazine*.

**d. Be sure your Penmanship is Distinct.**—  
"To write a letter with negligence, without stops, with crooked lines and great flourishes, is inelegant. It argues either great ignorance of what is proper, or great impudence toward the person to whom it is addressed. It makes no amends to add an apology for having scrawled a sheet of paper, for bad pens, because you should have had good ones ; or want of time, for nothing is more important to you, or to which your time can more properly be devoted."—LORD COLLINGWOOD.

In May, 1869, Horace Greeley wrote as follows, in reply to an invitation to lecture :

DEAR SIR:—I am overworked and growing old. I shall be sixty next February 3d. On the whole, it seems that I must decline to lecture henceforth, except in this immediate vicinity, if I do at all. I cannot promise to visit Illinois on that errand—certainly not now.

Yours,

HORACE GREELEY.

M. B. CASTLE, Sandwich, Ill.

He was surprised to receive by return mail the following letter :

HORACE GREELEY,

*New York Tribune.*

SANDWICH, May 12th.

DEAR SIR:—Your acceptance to lecture before our association next winter, came to hand this morning. Your penmanship not being the plainest, it took some time to translate it, but we succeeded, and would say, your time—"February 3d." and terms—" \$60 " are entirely satisfactory.—As you suggest, we may be able to get you other engagements in this immediate vicinity ; if so, we will advise you.

Yours respectfully,

M. B. CASTLE.

But this is Mr. Greeley's signature.



It is said that the late Dean Richmond, when president of the Hudson River Railroad, stopped one day at a station where the agent, not recognizing him, treated him with great rudeness. On returning to his office, Mr. Richmond wrote the agent a severe letter, discharging him. The agent departed, but Mr. Richmond's letter, of which the signature alone was easily legible, he used for several years as a free pass over Mr. Richmond's own railroad.

An importing merchant wrote to his agent in Africa to send him by next cargo "1 or 2 monkeys." He was astonished to get advice that, the market being short, the agent had been able to send only 702 by the first vessel, but would send the other 500 later. On explanation it proved that the merchant's "or" had been written like two ciphers, making "1 or 2" read "1002."

This illustrates one reason why, in important communications, numbers should be written out in words instead of in figures.

Even then the words must be written distinctly. Note the following from the *Penman's Art Journal*:

*Four for Four*  
*Send " Send*  
*Twenty " Twenty*  
  
*chairs for hair*  
*cleaver, & beaver*

**e. Be Careful Where you put Your Signature.**—This is not the place to warn against knowingly endorsing commercial paper—a habit which has brought many a man to penury. But it should be observed that, if a genuine signature, however obtained, is appended to a promissory note or other business obligation, the law holds that the note is good in the hands of an innocent holder. For this reason, one should never write a signature in the middle of a blank scrap of paper, and when appending it to a letter or other document should write it in close connection with the matter above, that nothing else may be written between.

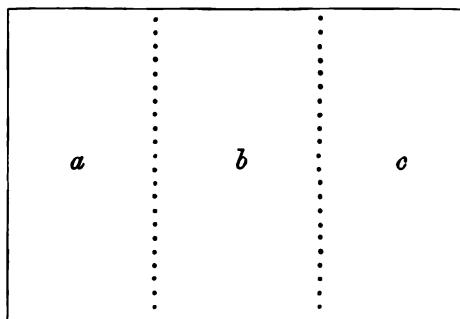
How important these precautions are may be judged from the ingenuity shown by swindlers in obtaining signatures. The following is an illustration of the devices employed:

An agent approaches a farmer with a seeding-machine, explaining its operation, and inviting the farmer to become sole agent for it. As the terms seem to involve no risk, the farmer consents, and signs the following contract:

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.,.....1881.	
ONE year after date, I promise to pay — — —, or order, Three Hundred and Twenty-five Dollars for value received, at six per cent. per annum, payable at Indianapolis, Ind.	bearer Thirty Dollars when I sell by worth of Patent Seeding Machines said Thirty Dollars, when due, to be
.....	Sole Agent for.....Company.

The dotted line here shown does not appear on the contract, of course, but as soon as the name is signed the swindler has only to divide the paper at the place indicated, in order to convert a conditional contract for thirty dollars into a promissory note for three hundred and twenty-five dollars.

**f. Fold Neatly.**—The paper commonly used for writing letters is called “Commercial Note,” the page being about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  x  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches. This folds into the ordinary No. 5 envelope as follows :

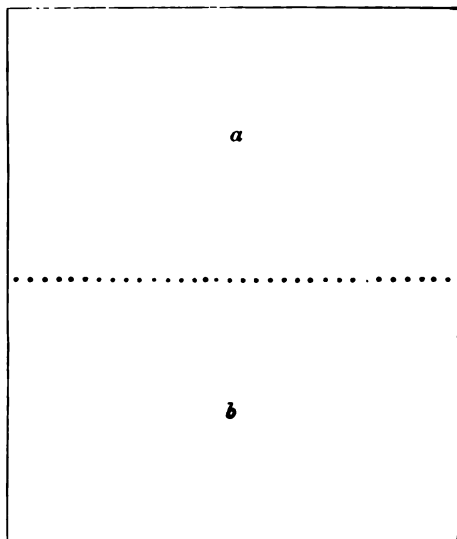


*a* being the top of the letter, *c* is folded over *b*, and then *a* is brought down over *c*, the leaf or leaves being divided into three nearly equal parts, though *b* will be a trifle wider than *c* and *a*.

“Letter-size” sheets, about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  x  $10\frac{1}{2}$  inches, being about double



the size of "commercial note," require a fold in the middle before dividing into thirds.

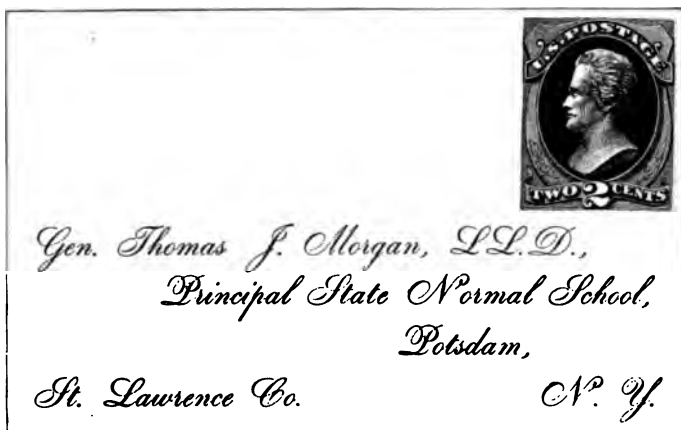


If *a* is the top of the sheet, fold *b* upon *a*, and then fold as in the example of Commercial Note.

For other sizes of paper, measure with the envelope before folding, to find how few and which folds will enable the sheet to go freely but not too loosely within the envelope. Of all the blunders of careless letter-writers, none is more exasperating than to crease the sheet this way and that way, in a dozen vain attempts to put a rectangle  $3\frac{1}{4}$  by  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches, into an envelope  $3\frac{1}{4}$  by 5, and finally to pound the crumpled and sweat-soiled sheet into a little pudgy mass that swells up a corner of the envelope like a tumor.

The one indispensable characteristic of a letter is NEATNESS; and neatness always involves calculation, as well as care. There is always one way of folding that will best adapt a given sheet of paper to a given envelope, and that way should be determined before the folding is begun. It is well to fold the sheet with a paper-knife.

**g. Direct Carefully.**—The form of direction upon the envelope has been conventionally determined as follows:



It will be noted :

(1) The stamp is placed in the upper right-hand corner, near the edge, but leaving slight and even margins on top and side.

(2) The name and the honorary titles should be upon the first line.

Actual honorary titles should not be omitted, unless by known preference of the person addressed. Where several titles belong to a single individual, a greater excludes a less of the same kind. Thus if one is "A.M., Ph. D., LL.D.," the last will be sufficient. "D.D., LL.D.," involving different distinctions, should both be retained. Although "D.D." is sometimes given to those not clergymen, it is customary to omit the "Rev." before a name when "D.D." follows. "M.D." following a name is preferable to "Dr." preceding, and "Mr." before a name is preferable to "Esq." following. The prefix "Hon." is used very loosely. It belongs

properly to Members of Congress, and some high offices of Government, but is often coveted by Members of Legislatures and various petty officials. The following are usual forms :

*His Excellency,*

*Grover Cleveland,*

*Governor of New York,*

*Albany, N. Y.*

*To the President,*

*Executive Mansion,*

*Washington, D. C.*

The same rules as to titles apply to the address with which a letter opens, the general form and arrangement of which appear in the letters quoted.

(3) The official position occupied, if any, should be named in the second line. This is due to the person addressed, as well as a security against mistake.

Where the person addressed occupies no official station, the county may, if so preferred, be written under the post-office, instead of to the left.

(4) In general appearance, the three or four main lines of the superscription should fall between oblique parallel lines, something as follows, and exact directions as to arrangement should be subordinate to considerations of general effect :

*Miss Mary Lawrence,  
Care Henry Stebbins, Esq.,  
209 Commonwealth Ave.,  
Boston, Mass.*

(5) Remember that though an address may be familiar to you, it is not necessarily so to the scores of post-office clerks through whose hands the letter may pass. It is therefore even more essential in the superscription than elsewhere that the hand-writing be distinctly legible.

The average of misdirected letters sent up to this department is over five hundred a day; the day I was there last it ran up to about one thousand. The most difficult of these go to Mr. Stone, who is called "the blind man," perhaps because he can decipher an inscription that is utterly illegible to any other man in America. His most difficult cases are the foreign letters. Here is a letter directed to "Sanduik," which he makes out to be Sandy Hook. Sometimes the arrangement of the name and address is curious.

For Mr. Thomas  
Smith Bridge  
port post-office  
Conn. America

is very plain when you once understand that it is "For Mr. Thomas Smith, Bridgeport, Conn., America." But when a man says "Hoio," how is anybody but a blind man to know that he means Ohio? One letter reads, "Best Feet Rue de Ague." Now the blind man knows that "Rue de Ague" is Spanish for Water Street, and that there is a Water Street in New Bedford, Massachusetts. "Lysram. Warner Co.," he translates into Luzerne, Warren Co.; and "Common County, P. A.," is made into Cameron County, Pennsylvania. But who would guess that "Overn C. D. Learey," in one line, means that it is to go to Auburn, in

search of C. D. L.? One letter is directed to "Kunstauzer Brauerei, S. I., Amerika." Mr. Stone recollects the fact that Constance's Brewery is at Stapleton, Staten Island, and the letter is sent there. He reads "Iolel" into Iowa, and "te Pella, in Yomah," he makes to go to Pella, in the same State. Nor does Ohio get off with one miss. Here is one letter that wants to go to "Stadt Hioh Zunsounati, Strasse 15,"—that is to the State of Ohio, Cincinnati, Street 15. But that is not all. This other one wants to reach the same city; but it has a bad spell of another kind, for its direction runs "Scitznaty." And then "Pizzo Burg Messessip," is sent to Vicksburg. Michigan is spelled "mutting." "Glass works Berkshire" is sent to Pittsfield, in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, where there is a glass factory. But the hardest one I saw was addressed to "John Hermann Schirmen," in one line, with the wonderful word "Staguekaundo" for the rest. Mr. Stone cut the word in twain, and read it "Chautauqua County," while he translated the whole into "John Hermann, Sherman P. O., Chautauqua County, N. Y."—*The Century*.

Care should be taken that abbreviations used in titles, etc., are correct and free from ambiguity. A letter addressed as follows was received by a gentleman attending a deaf and dumb association:

*Henry H. Johnson, M. D.,*

*Deaf and Dumb Ass.,*

*Rome, N. Y.*

(6) Finally, don't forget to seal your letter, and to stamp it. Commonplace as this direction seems, it is violated every day in almost every city and county of the land, and not unfrequently by those whose position and experience should render it ludicrously impossible.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### GENERAL RULES.

- a. Answer promptly, p. 196.
- b. Write frankly but discreetly, p. 196.
- c. Write naturally and directly, p. 197.
- d. Be sure your penmanship is distinct, p. 198.
- e. Be careful where you put your signature, p. 200.
- f. Fold neatly, p. 201.
- g. Direct carefully, p. 203.
  - (1) Stamp, p. 203.
  - (2) Name and titles, p. 203.
  - (3) Official position, p. 204.
  - (4) Slant, p. 204.
  - (5) Write distinctly, p. 205.
  - (6) Seal and stamp, p. 206.

### EXAMPLES OF LETTERS.

DEAR SIR :

On the eve of my departure to visit all parts of the island, and afterward the principal cities of the continent, I feel an ardent desire to be honored by being the bearer of a few lines from your own hand to whomever you may please to introduce me. I beg this of you with the hope that my efforts to advance ornithological studies, by the publication of my collections and manuscripts, may be thought worthy of your kind attentions, and an excuse for thus intruding on your precious moments. Should you feel the least scruple, please frankly decline it, and believe me, dear sir, that I value so highly my first reception, when presented to you by my good friend Captain Basil Hall, and your subsequent civilities, that I never shall cease to be, with the highest respect and admiration,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

JOHN J. AUDUBON.

DEAR MR. AUDUBON .

I am sure you will find many persons better qualified than myself to give you a passport to foreign countries, since circumstances have prevented our oftener meeting, and my ignorance does not permit me to say anything on the branches of natural history of which you are so well possessed. But I can easily and truly say, that what I have had the pleasure of seeing, touching your talents and manners, corresponds with all I have heard in your favor ; and that I am a sincere believer in the extent of your scientific attainments, though I have not the knowledge necessary to form an accurate judgment on the subject. I sincerely wish your travels may prove agreeable, and remain

Very much your obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

## CHAPTER XII.

### NARRATION.

A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct ;  
The language plain, and incidents well linked ;  
Tell not as new what everybody knows,  
And, new or old, still hasten to a close.  
There centering in a focus, round and neat,  
Let all your rays of information meet.—COWPER.

**The Subject Defined.**—As used in this chapter, the word Narration will be limited to the relation of incidents for the sake of the incidents themselves. It thus differs from what we have called Story-Telling (see Chapter VI., page 81), where the end in view is a forcible climax, and the incidents are selected and arranged solely with reference to that climax. In like manner it differs from what in the division of an oration is commonly called the Narration, where facts are stated only as an element of the persuasion to some conviction the speaker desires to enforce. In Narration as here treated there is no ulterior object. The writer has no climax to reach, no conviction to enforce, no moral to teach. His aim is to tell the story as it is, impartially, accurately, and forcibly.

**Of all Composition the Easiest.**—He that tells a story well is sure of listeners. When a man proposes to state his views of a given subject, some effort of attention is required ; indeed, one need entertain considerable respect for the man, to feel that his views are enough better than one's own to make it worth while to listen.

So in description: one either has been there, or may go there, or can read of it or hear of it at any time and in a dozen ways, and therefore feels no immediate necessity of listening.

But the combination of circumstances that forms a personal experience is unique. This man can tell us what no other man can tell in the same way. It is now,—or never.

Besides, there is constant variety. An essay is logical. There is method in it. One sentence, one paragraph, suggests another. One knows in a general way what will come next. So in description. The whole is named, and the description of the parts, however vivid, must follow a certain general order.

But in narration, the incidents are individual, united by their having happened in succession to somebody, but otherwise distinct. If a man begins to tell me about Mount Monadnock, the very name calls up its loneliness, its rocky sides, the bare region it is lifted up from, the toilsome ascent, the glorious sunset. The description may be vivid, but in a general way I have anticipated it. No such prevision occurs when a man full of excitement comes up to me and exclaims: "O you should have been with me just now! I was crossing the bridge, when a little girl——." Well, what? My imagination does not help me. I must listen, or I shall not know whether she was drowned, or rescued, or run over, or abducted, or what happened.

Narration may be divided into three kinds, according to the source of the interest it excites.

**Narration of Incident** depends for its interest upon the rapid and unexpected succession of events that it narrates. The reader's curiosity is kept on the alert. He is greedy for the marvellous, and enjoys it the more keenly as it approaches without quite reaching the improbable and the unnatural.

In fiction, this is the peculiar field of the Romance, and is the basis of Fairy Tales, and of the Melodrama.



properly to Members of Congress, and some high offices of Government, but is often coveted by Members of Legislatures and various petty officials. The following are usual forms :

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Your most obedient, humble servant,

JOHN J. AUDUBON.

DEAR MR. AUDUBON .

I am sure you will find many persons better qualified than myself to give you a passport to foreign countries, since circumstances have prevented our oftener meeting, and my ignorance does not permit me to say anything on the branches of natural history of which you are so well possessed. But I can easily and truly say, that what I have had the pleasure of seeing, touching your talents and manners, corresponds with all I have heard in your favor ; and that I am a sincere believer in the extent of your scientific attainments, though I have not the knowledge necessary to form an accurate judgment on the subject. I sincerely wish your travels may prove agreeable, and remain

Very much your obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

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The language plain, and incidents well linked ;  
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But the combination of circumstances that forms a personal experience is unique. This man can tell us what no other man can tell in the same way. It is now,—or never.

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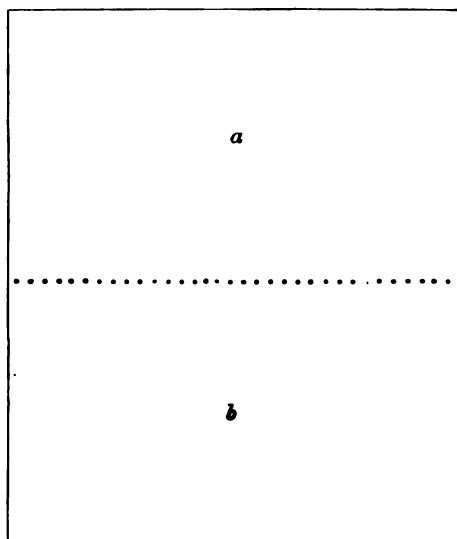
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the size of "commercial note," require a fold in the middle before dividing into thirds.

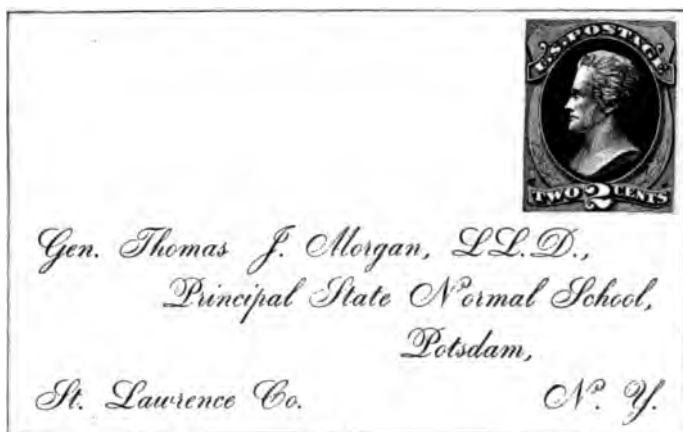


If *a* is the top of the sheet, fold *b* upon *a*, and then fold as in the example of Commercial Note.

For other sizes of paper, measure with the envelope before folding, to find how few and which folds will enable the sheet to go freely but not too loosely within the envelope. Of all the blunders of careless letter-writers, none is more exasperating than to crease the sheet this way and that way, in a dozen vain attempts to put a rectangle  $3\frac{1}{2}$  by  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches, into an envelope  $3\frac{1}{2}$  by 5, and finally to pound the crumpled and sweat-soiled sheet into a little pudgy mass that swells up a corner of the envelope like a tumor.

The one indispensable characteristic of a letter is NEATNESS; and neatness always involves calculation, as well as care. There is always one way of folding that will best adapt a given sheet of paper to a given envelope, and that way should be determined before the folding is begun. It is well to fold the sheet with a paper-knife.

**g. Direct Carefully.**—The form of direction upon the envelope has been conventionally determined as follows:



It will be noted :

(1) The stamp is placed in the upper right-hand corner, near the edge, but leaving slight and even margins on top and side.

(2) The name and the honorary titles should be upon the first line.

Actual honorary titles should not be omitted, unless by known preference of the person addressed. Where several titles belong to a single individual, a greater excludes a less of the same kind. Thus if one is "A.M., Ph. D., LL.D.," the last will be sufficient. "D.D., LL.D.," involving different distinctions, should both be retained. Although "D.D." is sometimes given to those not clergymen, it is customary to omit the "Rev." before a name when "D.D." follows. "M.D." following a name is preferable to "Dr." preceding, and "Mr." before a name is preferable to "Esq." following. The prefix "Hon." is used very loosely. It belongs

properly to Members of Congress, and some high offices of Government, but is often coveted by Members of Legislatures and various petty officials. The following are usual forms :

*His Excellency,*

*Grover Cleveland,*

*Governor of New York,*

*Albany, N. Y.*

*To the President,*

*Executive Mansion,*

*Washington, D. C.*

The same rules as to titles apply to the address with which a letter opens, the general form and arrangement of which appear in the letters quoted.

(3) The official position occupied, if any, should be named in the second line. This is due to the person addressed, as well as a security against mistake.

Where the person addressed occupies no official station, the county may, if so preferred, be written under the post-office, instead of to the left.

(4) In general appearance, the three or four main lines of the superscription should fall between oblique parallel lines, something as follows, and exact directions as to arrangement should be subordinate to considerations of general effect :

*Miss Mary Lawrence,  
Care Henry Stebbins, Esq.,  
209 Commonwealth Ave.,  
Boston, Mass.*

(5) Remember that though an address may be familiar to you, it is not necessarily so to the scores of post-office clerks through whose hands the letter may pass. It is therefore even more essential in the superscription than elsewhere that the hand-writing be distinctly legible.

The average of misdirected letters sent up to this department is over five hundred a day; the day I was there last it ran up to about one thousand. The most difficult of these go to Mr. Stone, who is called "the blind man," perhaps because he can decipher an inscription that is utterly illegible to any other man in America. His most difficult cases are the foreign letters. Here is a letter directed to "Sanduik," which he makes out to be Sandy Hook. Sometimes the arrangement of the name and address is curious.

For Mr. Thomas  
Smith Bridge  
port post-office  
Conn. America

is very plain when you once understand that it is "For Mr. Thomas Smith, Bridgeport, Conn., America." But when a man says "Hoio," how is anybody but a blind man to know that he means Ohio? One letter reads, "Best Feet Ruo de Ague." Now the blind man knows that "Rue de Ague" is Spanish for Water Street, and that there is a Water Street in New Bedford, Massachusetts. "Lysram. Warner Co.," he translates into Luzerne, Warren Co.; and "Common County, P. A.," is made into Cameron County, Pennsylvania. But who would guess that "Overn C. D. Learey," in one line, means that it is to go to *Auburn*, in

search of C. D. L.? One letter is directed to "Kunstauzer Brauerei, S. I., Amerika." Mr. Stone recollects the fact that Constance's Brewery is at Stapleton, Staten Island, and the letter is sent there. He reads "Iolel" into Iowa, and "te Pella, in Yomah," he makes to go to Pella, in the same State. Nor does Ohio get off with one miss. Here is one letter that wants to go to "Stadt Hioh Zunsounati, Strasse 15,"—that is to the State of Ohio, Cincinnati, Street 15. But that is not all. This other one wants to reach the same city; but it has a bad spell of another kind, for its direction runs "Scitznaty." And then "Pizzo Burg Messessip," is sent to Vicksburg. Michigan is spelled "mutting." "Glass works Berkshire" is sent to Pittsfield, in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, where there is a glass factory. But the hardest one I saw was addressed to "John Hermann Schirmen," in one line, with the wonderful word "Staguekaundo" for the rest. Mr. Stone cut the word in twain, and read it "Chautauqua County," while he translated the whole into "John Hermann, Sherman P. O., Chautauqua County, N. Y."—*The Century*.

Care should be taken that abbreviations used in titles, etc., are correct and free from ambiguity. A letter addressed as follows was received by a gentleman attending a deaf and dumb association:

*Henry H. Johnson, M.D.,*

*Deaf and Dumb Ass.,*

*Rome, N. Y.*

(6) Finally, don't forget to seal your letter, and to stamp it. Commonplace as this direction seems, it is violated every day in almost every city and county of the land, and not unfrequently by those whose position and experience should render it ludicrously impossible.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### GENERAL RULES.

- a.* Answer promptly, p. 196.
- b.* Write frankly but discreetly, p. 196.
- c.* Write naturally and directly, p. 197.
- d.* Be sure your penmanship is distinct, p. 198.
- e.* Be careful where you put your signature, p. 200.
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all that reveals the inner man as well as his public relations.

**Narration of Impressions** depends for its interest on the light the story throws, not upon the incidents narrated, but upon the person narrating them. In all narration this element is more or less present, but in some kinds, particularly in that which is consciously or unconsciously humorous, this element is predominant. (See page 108, last sentence.)

#### WHAT TO TELL.

**Accuracy** is the prime requisite in narration. Whether our interest be upon incident, or character, or impression, the story must be real, and it is real only in proportion as it is accurate in detail. This requires :

**a. Close Observation.**—It is the little things, the “side touches,” that give a story its reality. Tell me that you saw a horse run away and my attention is hardly arrested. But describe the cool evening, the mother and daughter leisurely returning from a pleasant visit, the spirited but gentle horse trotting quietly down the hill, the approaching bicycle, the sudden leap of the horse, the frightened pulling upon one rein by the mother, the overturn, the breaking of the wagon and the frantic plunging of the horse till he frees himself and disappears, the approach of the bicyclist to the confused heap of wagon and women, the groans and reproaches that greet him, the assistance he renders, and so on, and you make me see the occurrence as you saw it, and feel the same interest in it that you felt.

The force of language consists in raising complete images ; which have the effect to transport the reader as by magic into the very place of the important action, and convert him, as it were,

into a spectator, beholding everything that passes. The narrative in an epic poem ought to rival a picture in the liveliness and accuracy of its representations; no circumstance must be omitted that tends to make a complete image; because an imperfect image, as well as any other imperfect conception, is cold and uninteresting.—KAMES.

A lively and accurate description of an important event, raises in me ideas no less distinct than if I had been originally an eye-witness: I am insensibly transformed into a spectator, and have an impression that every incident is passing in my presence. On the other hand, a slight or superficial narrative produces but a faint and incomplete idea, of which ideal presence makes no part. Past time is a circumstance that enters into this idea, as it does into an incomplete idea of memory; I believe that Scipio existed about two thousand years ago, and that he overcame Hannibal in the famous battle of Zama. When I reflect so slightly upon that memorable event, I consider it as long past. But let it be spread out in a lively and beautiful description, I am insensibly transformed into a spectator: I perceive these two heroes in act to engage: I perceive them brandishing their swords, and cheering their troops; and in that manner I attend them through the battle, every incident of which appears to be passing in my sight.

I have had occasion to observe that ideas, both of memory and of speech, produce emotions of the same kind with what are produced by an immediate view of the object: only fainter, in proportion as an idea is fainter than an original perception. The insight we now have unfolds that mystery: ideal presence supplies the want of real presence; and in idea we perceive persons acting and suffering, precisely as in an original survey: if our sympathy be engaged by the latter, it must also, in some degree, be engaged by the former, especially if the distinctness of ideal presence approach to that of real presence. Hence the pleasure of a reverie, where a man, forgetting himself, is totally occupied with the ideas passing in his mind, the objects of which he conceives to be really existing in his presence. The power of language to raise emotions depends entirely on the raising of such lively and distinct images as are here described: the reader's passions are never sensibly moved till he is thrown into a kind of reverie; in which state, forgetting that he is reading, he conceives every incident as passing in his presence, precisely as if he were an eye-witness. A general or reflective remembrance cannot warm us into any emotion: it may be agreeable in some slight degree; but its ideas are too faint and obscure to raise anything like an emotion; and were they ever so lively, they pass with too much precipitation to have that effect: our emotions are never instantaneous; even such as come the soonest to their height have different periods of birth and increment; and to give opportunity for these different periods, it is necessary that the cause of every emotion be present to the mind a due time; for an emotion is not carried to its height by reiterated impressions only. We know that to be the case of emotions arising from objects of sight; a quick succession, even of the most beautiful objects, scarcely making any impression; and if this hold in the succession of original perceptions, how much more in the succession of ideas.—KAMES.

**b. A Memory for Details.**—This is largely a matter of cultivation. The story is familiar how Houdin's father taught him to walk by a shop window, and report, from a single glance, first, two or three things that he saw,

and the occurrence.

**c. Selection of what is Typical**  
nizing what is characteristic of the particular case is merely a further and more careful observation. The girl who seems to me ill-dressed ; and I observe a broad-brimmed white straw hat, trimmed with blue ; a white muslin gown, with short sleeves with blue ; long buff mits, low-heeled shoes, and a lace about the neck, etc. Now, if I am told that an ill-dressed girl, I want to know in which particulars she is ill-dressed ; so, instead of observing details, I observe further, to see what that produces the unpleasant impression. I observe the lace she wears. Her neck is short, and her look choked, as if she were wearing a collar against sore-throat. So far as I desire to know the impression she makes upon me, I must pay attention to her neck and her lace, remember her looks, and comparing her neck with other necks, and comparing her lace with other laces, and in my own mind why it is that what would look well on other girls is so unbecoming to her.

To select from the sentiment, scene, or event

The several circumstances here specified bring with them many appropriate associations. Our attention is rarely drawn by the buzzing of a fly in the window, save when everything is still. While the inmates are moving about the house, mice usually keep silence; and it is only when extreme quietness reigns that they peep from their retreats. Hence each of the facts mentioned presupposes numerous others, calls up these with more or less distinctness, and revives the feeling of dull solitude with which they are connected in our experience. Were all these facts detailed instead of suggested, the attention would be so frittered away that little impression of dreariness would be produced. Similarly in other cases. Whatever the nature of the thought to be conveyed, this skilful selection of a few particulars which imply the rest, is the key to success. In the choice of competent ideas, as in the choice of expressions, the aim must be to convey the greatest quantity of thoughts with the smallest quantity of words.—HERBERT SPENCER.

**d. Rejection of what is Low or Trivial.—**

This is the newspaper age, and the most characteristic feature of the modern newspaper is the interview. Our curiosity as to the private life of noted people is stimulated by information as to how much the President pays for his coats, where Jay Gould gets his hair cut, and whether Nilsson is fond of clams. Where shall we draw the line as to the private lives of prominent people, between legitimate interest and the curiosity of a Paul Pry?

**Historical Value of Revelation.—**The very fact that the things told are of a kind commonly concealed gives to minute personal gossip a certain factitious interest; but there is also a real value as well as genuine entertainment in the picture thus drawn of a man as a type of his class, or of his age, or of mankind. Few books are more certain of immortality than Pepys's Diary, contemptible as it makes Pepys himself appear; and Boswell's "Life of Johnson" will always be a classic, though

it insures to Boswell a curl of the lip at every mention of his name.

### **Macaulay's Description of Boswell.**

The "Life of Johnson" is assuredly a great, a very great work. Homer is not more decidedly the first of heroic poets, Shakspeare is not more decidedly the first of dramatists, Demosthenes is not more decidedly the first of orators, than Boswell is the first of biographers. He has no second. He has distanced all competitors so decidedly that it is not worth while to place them. Eclipse is first, and the rest nowhere.

We are not sure that there is in the whole history of the human intellect so strange a phenomenon as this book. Many of the greatest men that ever lived have written biography. Boswell was one of the smallest men that ever lived, and he has beaten them all. He was, if we are to give any credit to his own account, or to the united testimony of all who knew him, a man of the meanest and feeblest intellect. Johnson described him as a fellow who had missed his only chance of immortality by not having been alive when the *Dunciad* was written. Beauclerck used his name as a proverbial expression for a bore. He was the laughing-stock of the whole of that brilliant society which has owed to him the greater part of its fame. He was always laying himself at the feet of some eminent man, and begging to be spit upon and trampled upon. He was always earning some ridiculous nickname, and then "binding it as a crown unto him," not merely in metaphor, but literally. He exhibited himself, at the Shakspeare jubilee, to all the crowd which filled Stratford-on-Avon, with a placard round his hat bearing the inscription of Corsica Boswell. In his tour he proclaimed to all the world that at Edinburgh he was known by the appellation of Paoli Boswell. Servile and impertinent, shallow and pedantic, a bigot and a sot, bloated with family pride, and eternally blustering about the dignity of a born gentleman, yet stooping to be a tale-bearer, an eavesdropper, a common butt in the taverns of London, so curious to know everybody who was talked about, that, Tory and High-churchman as he was, he manœuvred, we have been told, for an introduction to Tom Paine, so vain of the most childish distinctions, that when he had been to court he drove to the

office where his book was printing without changing his clothes, and summoned all the printer's devils to admire his new ruffles and sword ; such was this man, and such was he contented and proud to be. Everything which another man would have hidden, everything the publication of which would have made another man hang himself, was matter of gay and clamorous exultation to his weak and diseased mind. What silly things he said, what bitter retorts he provoked, how at one place he was troubled with evil presentiments which came to nothing, how at another place, on waking from a drunken doze, he read the Prayer-book and took a hair of the dog that had bitten him, how he went to see men hanged and came away maudlin, how he added five hundred pounds to the fortune of one of his babies because she was not scared at Johnson's ugly face, how he was frightened out of his wits at sea, and how the sailors quieted him as they would have quieted a child, how tipsy he was at Lady Cork's one evening and how much his merriment annoyed the ladies, how impertinent he was to the Duchess of Argyle, and with what stately contempt she put down his impertinence, how Colonel Macleod sneered to his face at his impudent obtrusiveness, how his father and the very wife of his bosom laughed and fretted at his fooleries ; all these things he proclaimed to all the world, as if they had been subjects for pride and ostentatious rejoicing. All the caprices of his temper, all the illusions of his vanity, all his hypochondriac whimsies, all his castles in the air, he displayed with a cool self-complacency, a perfect unconsciousness that he was making a fool of himself, to which it is impossible to find a parallel in the whole history of mankind. He has used many people ill ; but assuredly he has used nobody so ill as himself.

That such a man should have written one of the best books in the world is strange enough. But this is not all. Many persons who have conducted themselves foolishly in active life, and whose conversation has indicated no superior powers of mind, have left us valuable works. Goldsmith was very justly described by one of his contemporaries as an inspired idiot, and by another as a being

Who wrote like an angel and talked like poor Poll.

La Fontaine was in society a mere simpleton. His blunders would not come amiss among the stories of Hierocles. But these men



attained literary eminence in spite of their weaknesses. Boswell attained it by reason of his weaknesses. If he had not been a great fool, he would never have been a great writer. Without all the qualities which made him the jest and the torment of those among whom he lived, without the officiousness, the inquisitiveness, the effrontery, the toad-eating, the insensibility to all reproof, he never could have produced so excellent a book. He was a slave, proud of his servitude, a Paul Pry, convinced that his own curiosity and garrulity were virtues, an unsafe companion who never scrupled to repay the most liberal hospitality by the basest violation of confidence, a man without delicacy, without shame, without sense enough to know when he was hurting the feelings of others, or when he was exposing himself to derision ; and because of all this he has, in an important department of literature, immeasurably surpassed such writers as Tacitus, Clarendon, Alfieri, and his own Johnson.

Of the talents which ordinarily raise men to eminence as writers, Boswell had absolutely none. There is not in all his books a single remark of his own on literature, politics, religion, or society, which is not either commonplace or absurd. His dissertations on hereditary gentility, on the slave-trade, and on the entailing of landed estates, may serve as examples. To say that these passages are sophistical would be to pay them an extravagant compliment. They have no pretence to argument, or even to meaning. He has reported innumerable observations made by himself in the course of conversation. Of these observations we do not remember one which is above the intellectual capacity of a boy of fifteen. He has printed many of his own letters, and in these letters he is always ranting or twaddling. Logic, eloquence, wit, taste, all those things which are generally considered as making a book valuable, were utterly wanting to him. He had, indeed, a quick observation and a retentive memory. These qualities, if he had been a man of sense and virtue, would scarcely of themselves have sufficed to make him conspicuous ; but, because he was a dunce, a parasite, and a coxcomb, they have made him immortal.

Those parts of his book which, considered abstractly, are most utterly worthless, are delightful when we read them as illustrations of the character of the writer. Bad in themselves, they are good

dramatically, like the nonsense of Justice Shallow, the clipped English of Dr. Caius, or the misplaced consonants of Fluellen. Of all confessors, Boswell is the most candid. Other men have pretended to lay open their own hearts: Rousseau, for example, and Lord Byron have evidently written with a constant view to effect, and are to be then most distrusted when they seem to be most sincere. There is scarcely any man who would not rather accuse himself of great crimes and of dark and tempestuous passions than proclaim his little vanities and wild fancies. It would be easier to find a person who would avow actions like those of Cæsar Borgia, or Danton, than one who would publish a day-dream like those of Alnaschar and Malvolio. Those weaknesses which most men keep covered up in the most secret places of the mind, not to be disclosed to the eye of friendship or of love, were precisely the weaknesses which Boswell paraded before the world. He was perfectly frank, because the weakness of his understanding and the tumult of his spirits prevented him from knowing when he had made himself ridiculous. His book resembles nothing so much as the conversation of the inmates of the Palace of Truth.

His fame is great; and it will, we have no doubt, be lasting; but it is fame of a peculiar kind, and indeed marvellously resembles infamy. We remember no other case in which the world has made so great a distinction between a book and its author. In general, the book and its author are considered as one. To admire the book is to admire the author. The case of Boswell is an exception, we think the only exception, to this rule. His work is universally allowed to be interesting, instructive, eminently original; yet it has brought him nothing but contempt. All the world reads it; all the world delights in it; yet we do not remember ever to have read or ever to have heard any expression of respect or admiration for the man to whom we owe so much instruction and amusement. While edition after edition of his book was coming forth, his son, as Mr. Croker tells us, was ashamed of it, and hated to hear it mentioned. The feeling was natural and reasonable. Sir Alexander saw that, in proportion to the celebrity of the work, was the degradation of the author. The very editors of this unfortunate gentleman's books have forgotten their allegiance, and, like those Puritan casuists who took arms by the au-

thority of the king against his person, have attacked the writer while doing homage to the writings. Mr. Croker, for example, has published two thousand five hundred notes on the "Life of Johnson," and yet scarcely ever mentions the biographer whose performance he has taken such pains to illustrate without some expression of contempt.

**Details of Value, only when Characteristic.**—In an essay on this subject, Coleridge has defined the boundary in narrating the lives of great men between liberty and license. He says :

"Yet Lord Bacon, by the expressions 'public faces' and 'propping to themselves a person' evidently confines the biographer to such facts as are either susceptible of some general inference, or tend to illustrate those qualities which distinguish the subject of them from ordinary men; while the passage in general was meant to guard the historian against considering, as trifles, all that might appear so to those who recognize no greatness in the mind, and can conceive no dignity in any incident which does not act on their senses by its external accompaniments, or on their curiosity by its immediate consequences. Things apparently insignificant are recommended to our notice, not for their own sakes, but for their bearings or influences on things of importance; in other words, when they are insignificant in appearance only.

"An inquisitiveness into the minutest circumstances and casual sayings of eminent contemporaries is indeed quite natural; but so are all our follies, and the more natural they are, the more caution should we exert in guarding against them. To scribble trifles even on the perishable glass of an inn-window, is the mark of an idler; but to engrave them on the marble monument, sacred to the memory of the departed great, is something worse than idleness. The spirit of genuine biography is in nothing more conspicuous than in the firmness with which it withstands the cravings of worthless curiosity, as distinguished from the thirst after useful knowledge. For, in the first place, such anecdotes as derive their whole and sole interest from the great name of the person by whom they are related, and neither illustrate his general character nor his particular actions, would scarcely have been noticed or remembered except

by men of weak minds: it is not unlikely, therefore, that they were misapprehended at the time, and it is most probable that they have been related as incorrectly as they were noticed injudiciously. . . . In the second place, these trifles are subversive of the great end of biography, which is to fix the attention, and to interest the feelings, of men on those qualities and actions which have made a particular life worthy to be recorded. It is, no doubt, the duty of an honest biographer to portray the prominent imperfections as well as excellences of his hero; but I am at a loss to conceive how this can be deemed an excuse for heaping together a multitude of particulars, which can prove nothing of any man that might not have been safely taken for granted of all men."—*The Friend*.

Nobody should suffer his hero to have a black eye, or to be pulled by the nose. The Iliad would never have come down to these times if Agamemnon had given Achilles a box on the ear. We should have trembled for the Æneid if any Tyrian nobleman had kicked the pious Æneas in the fourth rib. Æneas may have deserved it; but he could not have founded the Roman Empire after so distressing an accident.—SIDNEY SMITH.

#### HOW TO TELL.

**A Suitable Tone.**—Nothing is more important in narration than that the manner and the tone be adapted to the subject;—and not only to the subject absolutely, but to the subject in its relations to the speaker and to the hearers (see page 83). No art, no wit, can atone for insensibility to the proprieties of the occasion.

Let us illustrate this point by some references to death—a subject usually held sacred. "Naught save good of the dead" is a maxim founded on a universal instinct. The man is not to be envied that can pass a house where the funeral-services even of a stranger are in progress, without the impulse to lift his hat in silent sympathy.

Often quoted as a type of all that is true and touching in such

references is the following tribute to his wife by the author of "Day-Dreams of a School-master:"

Once upon a time, reader, a long, long while ago, I knew a school-master, and that school-master had a wife; and she was young, and fair, and learned; like that princess-pupil of old Ascham, fair and learned as Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother. And her voice was ever soft, gentle, and low, reader—an excellent thing in woman. And her fingers were quick at needle-work, and nimble in all a housewife's cunning. And she could draw sweet music from the ivory board; sweeter, stranger music from the chill life of her school-master-husband. And she was slow of heart to understand mischief; but her feet ran swift to do good. And she was simple with the simplicity of girlhood, and wise with the wisdom that cometh only of the Lord—cometh only to the children of the Kingdom. And her sweet young life was a morning hymn, sung by a child-voice to rich organ-music. Time shall throw his dart at death, ere death hath slain such another. For she died, reader, a long, long while ago. And I stood once by her grave—her green grave—not far from dear Dunedin. Died, reader, for all she was so fair, and learned, and simple, and good. And, I am told, it made a great difference to that school-master.

Contrast with this the following *consecutive* paragraphs from an Elmira newspaper:

Egan, the man killed at Chemung on Friday night, lived near the depot, and leaves a wife and family. He was walking on the track at the time, and was struck by No. 12 going East. He was a sober man. The accident occurred about nine o'clock. He was instantly killed—all cut to pieces—the head torn off and the body mangled.

Mr. Harry Murphy's home, which was made the brighter by the unfolding a little time ago of a dainty, tiny rosebud, sweet and precious, is now in shadow, for the tender little flower has withered. A few weeks only it lasted, yet sufficient to have its tendrils cling around hearts that are very lonely now. The parents have the sympathy of many friends.

Here is an attempt, evidently well-meaning, but very unhappy, to apply technical terms:

Alburt Seymour Wright, the associate editor of the *Ithaca Journal*, has handed in his last copy and read his last proof. A sudden and fatal illness emancipated him at the early age of 24 from the perplexities of illegible manuscript, the criticisms of insufferable egotists, and the exasperating blunders of the intelligent compositor. He did his duty in life, was honored by his friends, and, now that he is dead, his place will not be easily filled by his equal.—*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*.

But the unpardonable offence in journalism is to look upon death as a fit subject for fantastic humor and execrable puns. (See pp. 101-104.) Thus, a reporter on the *St. Paul Pioneer-Press* tells the tale of a man who drank a bottle of whiskey at one sitting, and died in the act, as follows:

George Dapp of Oshkosh made a bonded warehouse of his bay-window, and turned his toes up to the daisies.

Even more repulsive are the following :

A bad little boy had some powder,  
And in trying to make it go louder  
He succeeded so well  
That his folks couldn't tell  
His remains from a dish of clam chowder.

A lady named Mary Magui-ah  
Had trouble in lighting her q-ah.  
The wood being green,  
She used kerosene—  
[Pause; then continue solemnly,]  
She's gone where the fuel is dry-ah.—*Puck.*

The same criticism applies to carelessness in the language employed, even when the intention of the writer is to be respectful.

A tragic scene is thus depicted by the hand of one of the most matter-of-fact of all penny-a-liners: "The corpse lay in a berth adjoining the cabin, scarcely yet cold, with the young wife hanging over it and bewailing her loss in the most piteous tones in the Flemish tongue, she being unable to speak or understand a word of English."

**Bombast.**—While trifling language applied to a serious subject is offensive, high-flown language applied to trifling subjects is grotesque. Hence to ridicule a turgid style is the easiest form of burlesque. Thus :

IN THE VALE OF SORROW.

She took the veil ! So young, so fair,  
She seemed almost too pure for earth ;  
Around her seemed to breathe an air  
That came of more than human birth.

She took the veil ! Slow sunk the sun,  
As loath to leave so fair a sight,  
To leave so bright and pure a one  
To face the coming gloom of night.

She took the veil ! But Stewart's clerk,  
Who saw her take it, took her too ;  
The Judge said, " This is pretty work ;  
So, madam, ninety days for you."

" So you're not going to marry Ezra Haskins's daughter, though you know my heart is set on that match," thundered Sir Marma-

duke, the fairy king, to his son, Lem Mutton, the ox-tamer of Yellow Springs. "No, sir," meekly replied the young man. "And, sir," roared the exasperated father, "may I ask you why you thus dare to thwart my expressed will?" "Yes, sir," said his son, in a low, faint voice, like a joke before breakfast, "because I asked her and she said she'd rather marry a pump log for brains than anybody in this family." "Ah!" exclaimed Sir Marmaduke, with a falling inflection, and then he turned away to the new Ayrshire cow in the corner of the lot, and said, in the voice of a thunder-cloud, "Huddup yer foot, ye fur-tailed imp of a thistle patch, or I'll knock ye over with a neck-yoke!" And his own son knew that the proud-spirited old man was thinking of Her.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

## CONSOLATION.

"Why are you sad, Beryl?"

The girl turned her head slightly as these words were spoken, and as her lithe figure, with its rounded curves and beautiful flesh tints, stood sharply outlined, clear and perfect as a cameo, in the moonbeams that were falling in a silver spray through the branches of the linden trees, the sight was indeed a pretty one. George W. Simpson looked at her earnestly a moment, and saw that tears were welling up in the dusky brown eyes, and sobs that could not be restrained convulsing the girlish form.

"Why should I not be sad?" she said. The sweet summer is dying. There are hollows in her fair cheeks; a pathetic droop about the ripe red lips, dark shadows beneath the lovely eyes. And already across the hazy hills autumn peers, berry stains on her brown, slim fingers, purple vines trailing about her, scarlet buds, and golden-rod for the coronal, and a broken reed for her sceptre. Already the hollows are brimmed with amber haze and the hill-tops crowned with blue smoke. The sun looks languidly through dream clouds; a yellow leaf falls here and there, and some prudent birds fly southward ere yet the first frost makes the fruit ruddy and ripens the hazel-nuts in the hedges, ere yet the sumac catches some blood drops from the heart wound of fainting summer, and the aster looks with blue and wistful eyes from the woodland path.

"It is indeed a time fraught with suggestions that are mournful," said George. "but surely there is one gleam of hope, one little ray of golden sunshine amid all the mist and clouds"—and, bending over the girl in a loving fashion, he whispered a word in her ear.

A smile chased away the despondent look, and the tears that dimmed starry eyes were quickly dashed away. Putting her arms around George's neck, Beryl murmured softly and with a look of perfect trust: "You are right, sweetheart, I had forgotten the oysters."—*Chicago Tribune.*

**Descriptions Should be Specific.**—Says Lord Kames: "Objects ought to be painted so accurately as to form in the mind of the reader distinct and lively images. Every useless circumstance ought indeed to be suppressed,

because every such circumstance loads the narration ; but if a circumstance be necessary, however slight, it cannot be described too minutely. . . . Shakspeare says, 'You may as well go about to turn the sun to ice by fanning in his face with a *peacock's* feather.' The peacock's feather, not to mention the beauty of the object, completes the image : an accurate image cannot be formed of that fanciful operation without conceiving a particular feather ; and one is at a loss when this is neglected in the description."

The economy of the recipient's mental energy, into which are thus resolvable the several causes of the strength of Saxon English, may equally be traced in the superiority of specific over generic words. That concrete terms produce more vivid impressions than abstract ones, and should, when possible, be used instead, is a thorough maxim of composition. As Dr. Campbell says, "The more general the terms are, the picture is the fainter ; the more special they are, the brighter." We should avoid such a sentence as :

In proportion as the manners, customs, and amusements of a nation are cruel and barbarous, the regulations of their penal code will be severe.

And in place of it we should write :

In proportion as men delight in battles, bull-fights, and combats of gladiators, will they punish by hanging, burning, and the rack.

This superiority of specific expressions is clearly due to a saving of the effort required to translate words into thoughts. As we do not think in generals but in particulars—as, whenever any class of things is referred to, we represent it to ourselves by calling to mind individual members of it—it follows that when an abstract word is used, the hearer or reader has to choose from his stock of images, one or more, by which he may figure to himself the genus mentioned. In doing this, some delay must arise—some force be expended ; and if, by employing a specific term, an appropriate image can be at once suggested, an economy is achieved, and a more vivid impression produced.—HERBERT SPENCER.

"I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel ; nay, ye yourselves know that *these* hands have ministered to my necessi-



ties and to them that were with me."—Acts xx., 33, 34. Had he said *my* hands, the sentence would have lost nothing, either in meaning or perspicuity, but very much in vivacity.—CAMPBELL.

Aristotle has remarked "that uneducated men have more power of persuasion among the ignorant than the educated have; because the latter are apt to speak of matters of common knowledge and of a general character, while the former speak from their own knowledge, and say the things that are close to their hearers." (Rhet. II. xxii., 3.) But the example of such men as Luther and Latimer shows that the learned can acquire the power of speaking of familiar things in the plain style.—HERVEY.

**The Use of Proper Names.**—Hence dates, and the names of persons and places, give exactness and reality to the narration.

Every one is sensible, for instance, that the most humorous or entertaining story loseth egregiously when the relator cannot or will not name the persons concerned in it. No doubt the naming of them has the greatest effect on those who are acquainted with them, either personally or by character, but it hath some effect even on those who never heard of them before. It must be an extraordinary tale indeed which we can bear for any time to hear if the narrator proceeds in this languid strain: A certain person who shall be nameless on a certain occasion said *so and so*, to which a certain other person in the company who shall likewise be nameless made answer. Nay, so dull doth a narrative commonly appear wherein anonymous individuals only are concerned, that we choose to give feigned names to the persons rather than none at all.—CAMPBELL.

**Caution** should be exercised, however, in naming persons whom a narrative reflects upon. Unless there is good reason to tell of another what that other would regret to have told, the narrative approaches libel, and the narrator appears at best as a gossip.

Wendell Phillips was formerly severely censured for personal criticism and condemnation in his speeches. He replied: "If I

denounce what seems to be moral cowardice in the abstract, everybody yawns and agrees. If I say I mean Edward Everett, whom everybody respects, and whose political example seems to me pernicious, everybody may be shocked, but they fall to thinking."

The point of satire lies in its individuality. Its victims must have a local habitation and a name. Sly allusion, semi-equivocal expression, and pointed insinuation, too well defined to leave its personal application doubtful, therefore, form a large part of the diction of journalistic articles relating to social life, while in political warfare the boldest libels, the most undisguised grossness of abuse, alone suit the palate of heated partisanship. Hence the dialect of personal vituperation, the rhetoric of malice in all its modifications, the art of damning with faint praise, the sneer of contemptuous irony, the billingsgate of vulgar hate, all these have been sedulously cultivated, and, combined with a certain flippancy of expression and ready command of a tolerably extensive vocabulary, they are enough to make the fortune of any sharp, shallow, unprincipled journalist, who is content with the fame and the pelf which the unscrupulous use of such accomplishments can hardly fail to secure.—MARSH.

**Avoid Superlatives.**—"Writers of inferior rank are continually upon the stretch to enliven and enforce their subject by exaggeration and superlatives. This, unluckily, has an effect contrary to what is intended; the reader, disgusted with language that swells above the subject, is led by contrast to think more meanly of the subject than it may possibly deserve. A man of prudence, besides, will be no less careful to husband his strength in writing than in walking: a writer too liberal of superlatives exhausts his whole stock upon ordinary incidents, and reserves no share to express, with greater energy, matters of importance."—KAMES.

**VERY.**—"This very small word is very often used in the English language when a sentence would be very much stronger and the meaning very much more forcible without it. If a man has not

much hair on the top of his head, it is not enough for people to say simply that he is bald, but he is very bald. A man is not stingy, but he is very stingy, when the one good strong word 'stingy' would put the whole point forcibly. A doctor of divinity is not learned, but very learned; a doctor of medicine is not crotchety, he is very crotchety; while a lawyer is not cunning, but very cunning. In the same way, a young lady is not handsome, but very handsome. The qualifier has become so common that it is weakening to the word it is joined to. In nine cases out of ten where *very* is used to intensify human speech, a single, bold word without the *very* would hit the meaning like a hammer, and drive it home with a directness unknown to clogged and hampered expression.

" 'Very' seems to be a word designed by providence for young ladies to express their feelings with. This portion of the community probably could not get on without their adverb, but the English of the rest of the race would be strengthened if the little qualifier were relegated almost wholly to the fair class to whom it belongs. It creeps into our literature as insidiously as the measles into a family of fifteen, and, once there, it stays like an office-seeker. It breaks out everywhere, even in the most high-toned and 'cultivated' writing. A newspaper, which is authority on the art of literary composition, prints, for instance, a thrilling description of a brilliant party. Every lady present was very much this or that. Mrs. Blank, who was a very intimate friend of Mrs. General Dash, wore a very handsome green satin dress, and had a very handsome silver comb in her back hair. Mrs. General Dash wore an exceedingly becoming dress, which was very elaborately made. Two young ladies, whose dresses were exceedingly becoming and very graceful, were accompanied by a young man who had a very light moustache. Everybody was either 'very,' or 'exceedingly,' or 'most highly' something. The air bristled with superlatives.

"It combines instruction with amusement to count the 'veries' in a column of newspaper advertisements. A 'general housework' applicant is not content with being a respectable woman and a good cook. She is a very respectable woman and a very good cook. It is enough, in all conscience, to be said of a woman that she is a superior waitress. Superior itself means better than good, but

this uncommon waitress tacks on the word 'very,' too, and thus becomes very better than good.

"The climax of veriness is reached, however, by a girl. She is 'a very competent cook, understands waiting at table in a very efficient manner, and is in all respects very first-class.' 'In all respects very first-class qualifications' is good. It is only equalled by the young man who was a very perfect horseman and rode a very black horse. A fine example, too, of the redundant 'very' is the reply of the old tar who was blown overboard at Trafalgar, and rescued with much difficulty, and who, long afterward, being asked by a sympathetic lady how he felt on that occasion, answered: 'Wet, ma'am, very wet.'"—*Cincinnati Commercial*.

NEWSPAPER ENGLISH.—Now, in the days of Frankhahn the king, it was so that Frankfelpa, the king's messenger, went out into the land of *The Hawk-eye* and made proclamation unto the people, saying:

"What doest thou knowest, and if thou knowest naught, what is it?"

For he said within himself, "Verily, that which they know not is as the sand upon the sea-shore as compared with that which they know, and it will go further to fill up."

But the people held their peace, for the times were barren and there was a famine of items in the land.

And the king's messenger returned, and he quoted from the wise man, and said: "Of a verity, it is as Solomon said when he was local on the *Jerusalem Overtaker*, there is nothing new under the sun."

But the king commanded him, saying, "Whoop her up!"

And it was so that Frankfelpa, the king's messenger, was wroth, and he said: "What is this that the king commandeth? That I shall make bricks without straw?"

And he got him a note-book that was as big as an atlas, and girded up his loins and went forth.

And he spake unto a man on South Hill, saying: "The smoke as of a burning ascendeth from that back yard; tell me, I pray thee, what is the cause thereof?"

And the South Hill man said: "Of a verity it is only the ash barrel, and is it not already put out?"

But the king's messenger was glad, and he opened his note-book and wrote therein: "Dreadful Holocaust! The Devouring Element sweeps over South Hill! The Dun Clouds of Murky Smoke blot out the Sunlight! The Fiery Flames with Forked Tongues fly through the Lurid Atmosphere!"

And his heart was glad. And it was so that he met a boy at the depot selling apples, six for a nickel, to the travellers on the train. And the lad was weeping.

So the king's messenger sayeth unto him: "Whence so much weepeth?"

But the lad said: "Verily, when I would sell my apples on the train, the train boy rose up against me, and entreated me roughly, and tossed my apples under the baggage-truck, and invested me even with the order of the G. B." Which, by interpretation, is the Grand Bounce.

And the messenger laughed and made merry with himself, and wrote in his note-book: "Another Mercantile Industry Paralyzed! The Iron Heel of Monopoly upon the Neck

the officer clapped the "come alongs" onto him, and run him in when he would not.

And the messenger wrote in his book : "Despotism Unmasked! the Iron Hand of Might! The Right of Free Speech Trampled Upon People to Assemble and Discuss Ignored and Outraged"

Then it was so that he met a boy who had trod upon a nail in the lad was weeping and swearing.

And the messenger smiled and entered upon his chronicles : "Heard The Bleeding and Mangled Body of the Victim Conveyed to his Home"

Then he pursued his journey and saw a West Hill man at work him : "Friend, what doest thou?"

And the man said : "Lo, thou seest ; I am taking down this many years and a few daughters have rendered well-nigh useless."

And the king's messenger sighed and wrote the head-lines in his "The Iconoclasm of Progress! Another Old Landmark Gone!"

Then it was so that he saw yet another man who was busy, and a man was patching a bad place in the roof of his barn with new "Hammer and Hatchet! New Buildings Going up on North Hill Mock the Clouds, and Stately Domes that Kiss the Stars!"

And he closed the book of record and was merry, and he humped the office and commanded that they should place before him five bushels and a barrel of ink.

And the king was astonished, and said unto the messenger : "Heard"

And the messenger made obeisance unto the king, and said : "Oft the land of *The Hawk-eye* is bully. Only out three hours, and six four wards to hear from! Order on twenty quires extra, and send word"

And when the king was gone out, Frankiefelp, the king's messenger's youngest servitor of the king, who held his peace, for he was amazed to come so, for he himself had been out all morning, and had returned a barren.

But the king's messenger, while he looked upon the young man, he eye, that it well-nigh closed, and he laid his finger upon his nose, and the young man : "Sonnle, be of good cheer ; thou hast much to learn ; in the way the old thing works."

And the next day the

duce a distinct impression, the two words together merely forming a sort of poetical circumlocution for the noun alone. Such epithets pad out the narrative without strengthening it, and are often ridiculous.

Thus a New Hampshire editor speaks of a "new bread wagon, painted in the highest style of decorative art, bearing upon its side in golden letters the talismanic word Biddle, and drawn by a coal-black steed, clad in a neat fitting and ornamental harness, to which were added broad white reins, skilfully handled by a good-looking driver."

Many writers of that kind abound so in epithets, as if poetry consisted entirely in high-sounding words. Take the following instance :

When black-browed Night her dusky mantle spread,  
 And wrapt in solemn gloom the sable sky :  
 When soothing Sleep her opiate dews had shed,  
 And sealed in silken slumbers every eye :  
 My wakeful thoughts admit no balmy rest,  
 Nor the sweet bliss of soft oblivion share :  
 But watchful woe distracts my aching breast,  
 My heart the subject of corroding care :  
 From haunts of men with wandering steps and slow  
 I solitary steal, and soothe my pensive woe.

Here every substantive is faithfully attended by some tumid epithet ; like young master, who cannot walk abroad without having a laced livery-man at his heels. Thus in reading without taste, an emphasis is laid on every word ; and in singing without taste, every note is graced. Such redundancy of epithets, instead of pleasing, produce satiety and disgust.—KAMES.

A principal device in the fabrication of the mock-eloquent style is to multiply epithets—dry epithets, laid on the outside, and into which none of the vitality of the sentiment is found to circulate. You may take a great number of the words out of each page, and find that the sense is neither more nor less for your having cleared the composition of these epithets of chalk of various colors, with which the tame thoughts had submitted to be rubbed over in order to be made fine.—FOSTER.

The unthinking use of epithets leads to ridiculous inconsistencies. Thus :

I solemnly declare that I have not *wilfully* committed the least *mistake*.—SWIFT.

So the *pure* limpid stream, when *foul* with stains,  
Of rushing torrents and descending rains.—ADDISON.

I mention, as in courtesy bound, an account of this construction which has been sent me by a correspondent anxious to vindicate Shakspeare from having used a modern vulgarity.—ALFORD.

*Shakspeare's* having used a *modern* vulgarity is about equal to Jeffrey's remark in his *Essays*: "It is well known that the ancients have stolen most of our bright thoughts."—MOON.

Now it is undeniable that a great portion of the young ladies and gentlemen who write poetry and stories never saw an aspen leaf or heard the notes of a nightingale, to recognize either of them. Yet it is quite safe to challenge any one to find anywhere in their poetry or prose that when their heroine was frightened she did not tremble like an aspen leaf; or when she lifted up her voice in song that she did not sing as sweetly as a nightingale. It is also an undeniable fact that no human corpse that is properly buried is ever eaten by worms, and yet with what ill-concealed delight they always remind us that we shall be food for those detestable animals, and how pleased they are to speak more correctly, of man himself being but a worm of the dust. You will also notice in the writings of these persons that though they are always climbing the mount of Parnassus or attempting to scale its height, yet that they deem fame to be but an empty bubble or like the baseless fabric of a dream. They love to study the book of nature, and hope with them often soars exultant, and subsequently folds her wings. Their youth build many air-castles and poise the cup of happiness to their lips: a certain number of summers or springs always pass over their heads (which gave rise to a joke referring to the springs in ladies' hoops), after which time they fall a prey to Cupid's arrows, and are bound in the holy bonds of matrimony. Their children perish like blossoms, while their old men are cut down by time's scythe. They speak of those born as being ushered into existence, and of those who die as being launched into eternity. Their travellers always wend their way instead of going. Their ships, before embarking on the raging main, invariably weigh anchor and then walk the waters like a thing of life. Their cannon are loud-mouthed. Their streams, when frozen, are bound by winter's icy chain. The twelve o'clock bell is the iron tongue of midnight. Their dancers are votaries of Terpsichore who trip the light fantastic toe. They frequently refer also to beetling crags, natal days, green-eyed jealousy, bitter tears, the king of day, the silver moon, forlorn hopes, adamantine souls, bowers of ease, the pangs of poverty, time's effacing fingers, laughing sunbeams, false caittiffs, the fleeting breath, and to skeletons in the closet.

In descriptions of natural scenes you will notice a prevalence of such things as blossoming meadows, rippling streams, babbling brooks, blue skies, smiling sunlight, green verdure, cool retreats, umbrageous shadows, feathered songsters and melodious warblers.

You will notice that pretty girls are as beautiful as hoursia, with the form of Hebe, with rosy cheeks, pearly teeth, laughing eyes, dimpled chins, alabaster brows, and cherry or ruby or coral lips. Certainly there is no womanly beauty that has not been described

over and over again; and I suppose the descriptions of heroines from all the novels and short stories ever written would conform to six or eight models, that would include several eccentric types; for the great mass would be included under four models.

In the papers an accident is a frightful catastrophe, a street fight a terrible affray, an assault is a diabolical outrage, suicide is a rash act, a bad man is a fiend in human shape, a person who does anything bad succeeds in accomplishing his hellish design, fire is the devouring element, things are postponed on account of the inclemency of the weather (meaning rain), people are prevented from doing things by circumstances over which they have no control, and actors and actresses are deterred from playing by indisposition (meaning that they are sick or indisposed to play).—WAKEMAN.

**Omit Irresistible Inferences.**—A story before us, in telling of the call of the heroine at a Fifth Avenue mansion, states that when the carriage stopped she descended, shut the carriage-door behind her, mounted the steps, rang the bell, *waited till the door was opened*, gave her card to the servant that appeared, and entered the hall. A few of these details might safely have been left to the imagination.

We have received a story entitled "A Dark Deed," which is respectfully declined. The first chapter opens with, "It is midnight." This is all right. It is often midnight—at least seven times a week; but the author forgot to add, "and silence brooded over the city." This is a fatal oversight. Silence always broods over a city when it is midnight in works of fiction—although nowhere else. We can't print a story in which silence doesn't brood at midnight.—*Norristown Herald*.

A reporter of the *Herald* was assigned last night to "write something about the weather—something about the heat—something about the scarlet rash and the dog-days, and all that sort of thing." What he evolved from the inmost recesses of his heat-oppressed brain is here presented in a revised form with due apologies for its production.

"It was a timely topic——"

[What immediately followed the above statement has been eliminated, for it partook of editorial assertion: and reporters are not employed to dictate the policy of newspapers, even on topics as general as the weather.—The Editor.]

"All day long the hot sun poured down its scorching rays——"



[Nothing but a pressure of business is accountable for the appearance of this last sentence. Of course "all day long" the "hot" sun had "poured down" its scorching "rays!" The sun don't shine in the night time; there is no cold sun; if the sun was "hot" it's only natural to suppose that its rays were "scorching," and if the "scorching rays" had poured up there would have been no need of this article! The same old glittering generalities!—The Editor.]

"While it is hardly probable that the day was the hottest known to the memory of the oldest inhabitant——"

[Of course it is "hardly probable;" the day of the Chicago fire was infinitely hotter. Besides, the reporter was not here when the oldest inhabitant arrived, or he wouldn't now be reporting for a daily paper; and the "oldest inhabitant" as a general thing is only fit anyway to attend funerals, sit on coroner's juries, and swap lies with the next oldest inhabitant.—The Editor.]

"Every one was fully convinced that the dog days had at last arrived——"

[Of course they were, when all know that dog days begin July 25th and last until September 3d, and sometimes a week longer.—The Editor.]

"The scarlet rash, that dread scourge of the full-blooded person——"

[The rest of that sentence betrayed so great familiarity with the condition of the bodies of the sweating public that it was manifestly absurd. The reporter himself may have the scarlet rash or the crimson lake eruption—that's nobody's business but his own, and of no interest to the readers of this journal.—The Editor.]

"The beer saloons and soda fountains were liberally patronized by the thirsty populace——"

[Populaces not thirsty are not expected to patronize any fluid-vending establishment. Moreover, the *Herald* is not a free advertising agent of any sloop shop.—The Editor.]

"And the exhausted toiler sank to restless sleep breathing a prayer that the morning would bring relief."

[It will perhaps be surmised from the above that the exhausted toiler was the reporter, and that he sank to restless sleep and sent down his "copy" afterward. But he didn't. He finished his writing before he went home and before the cooling rain fell on the parched earth. He had no right nor reason to say that the "exhausted toiler" sank to "restless sleep." An "exhausted" toiler will sleep a restless sleep for the simple reason that he can't do otherwise. And the statement that he prayed for relief on the morrow is superfluous because all the prayers in the nation wouldn't change the what-is-to-be, and praying against fate, even with Vennor on one's side, is foolish uselessness.—The Editor.]

"The temperature yesterday, as observed by Manasse, optician, 88 Madison Street, was as follows: 8 A.M., 80; 9 A.M., 82; 10

A.M., 83; 11 A.M., 85; 12 M., 86; 1 P.M., 88; 2 P.M., 89; 3 P.M., 90; 4 P.M., 91; 5 P.M., 91; 6 P.M., 89."

[The last item contains ample information for the enlightenment of the resident whose personal experience has not convinced him that it was very, very hot yesterday.—The Editor.]—*Chicago Herald*.

**Above All, Preserve Unity.**—Let your story be not only about something, but about some one thing.

It is one of the charms of "Robinson Crusoe" that all the incidents are grouped about a single hero. In Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" half the interest that has been so unflaggingly maintained through the first part evaporates when the adventures pertain to a company instead of a single individual. The discovery of America is a familiar story so far as Columbus remains the central figure, but when the interest is diverted from one to another of a dozen explorers, it soon diminishes, and fixes nothing in the memory.

A sketch in *Harper's Weekly* begins thus:

The body of Stephen Girard lies in a sarcophagus in the vestibule of the main college building, which is built after the model of a Grecian temple; its 34 Corinthian columns measure six feet in diameter, and are 55 feet high, and cost \$15,000 each. The college opened with 95 pupils.

**Imagination in Narration.**—The truth of fiction is as real as the truth of fact. Indeed, there is a sense in which fiction is truer than fact; for while fact deals largely with marvels, with the unusual and the abnormal, especially with the unexpected, fiction is powerless except as it deals with such events and consequences as appear probable. The Dime Novel finds readers only among those too inexperienced and ignorant to detect the improbabilities that abound (see page 210). The fictions that live, live because their truth to nature is confirmed by the general experience of mankind.

I can well sympathize with the contempt mingled with indig-

was any such ring. (*De Off.* III., 9.)—WHATELY.

### **Facts Supplemented by the Im**

When the facts given are thoroughly made real in the mind, they clothe the imagination with incidents not recorded, but conceived in proportion as the imagination is excited. These incidents may therefore be used to supplement the facts, and in much narration are essential to the presentation.

It is imagination that gives vivid comparisons like

The battle of Waterloo was fought on a piece of ground beginning with a capital A. The English were at the ankle of the French, and the battle was decided about the center of the feet, and the battle was decided about the center of the feet.

The main question as to a novel is—Did it amuse you? Did it surprise at dinner coming so soon? Did you mind it? Did you mind ten, and twelve for eleven? Were you too late to get to the party? Did you sit up beyond the usual hour? If a novel produces these effects, it is good; if it does not—story, language, and description itself cannot save it. It is only meant to please, and if it does not please, that, or it does nothing.—SYDNEY SMITH.

**A TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE.**—Some ten years ago I was a teacher in a large boarding school. The boys were mostly from wealthy but uncultivated families who sent their

It seemed necessary to put an hour's Bible lesson into that period, but the principal of the school said he had tried that once, and he could not make it work. The boys complained that three hours in a hot little country church, with two dry sermons, a melodeon-led choir, cushionless seats, and two marks if they whispered, was religion enough for one day; and he added with a chuckle that he thought the boys were about right.

There arose, then, this problem: how to interest in a weekly Bible lesson boys of no previous religious training, and with a prejudice against anything of the kind. I resolved to select one Bible story for each Sunday, and to tell it in such a way that they would enjoy hearing it, and want to hear another. So I mapped out my work, and first made myself thoroughly acquainted with the story as told in the Bible. I made tables of chronology, prepared maps, and looked up all the marginal references. Then I got all the helps upon which I could lay hands, two or three Bible dictionaries, Josephus, the best commentaries, anything published which could give details. Then, when I had fairly in hand everything I could find which was authentic, I filled in from my imagination. I said to myself, this story is not for scholars, but for rough boys, and I must tell it so as to make upon them the same impression that the narrative makes upon me. So I filled in here, I enlarged there, I dwelt upon details, I introduced local comparisons, I made use of the boys' own experience, and especially of incidents which had happened at the school, where there was any opportunity to draw a parallel; and, in short, I made the story real to every boy there. I don't believe it sounded orthodox; but it held the boys, because it was in sympathy with their thought and experience. And I don't mind expressing my opinion that if we are to contend successfully with the flood of sensationalism with which the news-counters and the heads of our boys are teeming, we must offer in its place something else besides the Westminster Catechism and Bishop South's sermons.

It has been well said that the only unpardonable fault in a book is to be unreadable, because if it is unreadable it is not a book. So I would say that the only unpardonable fault in teaching is to be uninteresting; for teaching which does not interest is not teaching. The condition of thought-quickenning is sympathy.

1. Consult cyclopædias for a general view of literature.
2. Read the best histories for the subject of general history.
3. Read monographs for details.
4. Make copious notes from works read, and read, patient thought to understand the facts in
  - a. Their intrinsic value.
  - b. Their relative importance.
  - c. The relations of cause and effect.
5. Jot down every significant fact and idea that

## II. Composition.

1. Make a preliminary sketch or outline of the subject it to revision.
2. Make a complete analysis, and revise it.
3. Write rapidly and continuously, *con amore*.
4. Subject the essay to careful revision as to :
  - a. Historical, logical, and rhetorical quality of fact, and justness of philosophy.
  - b. Unity, symmetry, and completeness of apprehensive and concise.
  - c. Clearness, force, elegance, and adaptation.
5. Append list of authorities consulted, and give citations.

## III. General Considerations.

3. A good essay is worthy of being well read.
4. A full synopsis spread upon the black-board, or, better still, furnished to the teacher and to each member of the class, would be creditable to the writer and grateful to his listeners.
5. Two useful maxims are:
  - a. "Breadth without accuracy and accuracy without breadth are almost equal evils."
  - b. "We understand the diffuse,—we remember the concise."
6. Helpful questions :
  - a. Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?
  - b. (Of events), What then?
  - c. Why not?
  - d. What of it?

#### METHOD OF BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY.

### I. Sources.

1. Autobiography, if extant.
2. Diary, journal, letters.
3. Accounts written by contemporaries.
4. Published works.
5. Biographies.
6. General histories.

### II. Accessories.

1. Portraits.
2. Pictures of places.
3. Personal visit to scenes associated with the man.
4. Whatever gives vividness to our conceptions.

#### PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT OF HIS AGE.

1. Ancestry.
2. Birth—*a.* time ; *b.* place.
3. Education—*a.* home ; *b.* schools ; *c.* books (all formative influences) ; *d.* nature ; *e.* public events ; *f.* travel.

6. Estimate of character—*a.* personal apper qualities; *c.* moral qualities; *d.* influence on i parison with others.—GEN. T. J. MORGAN.

#### TWO INCIDENTS WELL-TOLD.

**THEY WERE SO HUNGRY.**—"Last night," said Policema Street Station, "I was walking in Broadway, near Bond Street. My attention was attracted by a crowd of some four hundred pe to the straw hat factory of Ball & Ray at 664. Everybody was y story of the building. I looked up, and there I saw a young won nice outside the second-story window.

"'Hullo!' says I.

"'I'm awful hungry,' says she.

"Then she said that she and four other girls were locked in. who stood directly behind me kept shouting: 'I hear it's a fire. out!'

"Then the young woman shouted down: 'We are all locke out: and whatever shall we do? When they closed up the build. us in, and we're so very hungry.'

"'If so be as they're hungry,' says the man behind me. 'give

"The girl in the window went on: 'The janitor went home v o'clock. He cried "All out!" and then locked the door and went out, and we're very hungry.'

"'If so be as they can't get out,' says the man behind my ear partment and get a hook and ladder.'

"I learned from the girls that one of the proprietors of the Ball, lived at 117 East One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Street. the station and told the sergeant. He telegraphed to Mr. Ball, an comes to the scene.

"'Oh, Mr. Ball, please let us out. 'cause we're so very hungry.'

"Mr. Ball said he hadn't any key, and he didn't know where small boy appeared who said he knew the janitor, and would fetc and the girls were let out."

FATHER AND SON.—“Come, papa; I know where we are. This is the Bowery, and Canal Street is only a little way up. Come on.”

The speaker was a boy about seven years old. He was neatly and warmly dressed, and as prettily spoken as any of the children that play in Reservoir Square on a summer afternoon. His hand was clasped in the big, begrimed palm of a man in the dress of a hard-working mechanic. The man was so drunk that he nearly went upon all fours, and when he lurched from one side to another he jerked the little fellow from his feet. It was half-past three o'clock on Sunday morning.

“Yes, I'll show yer papa where to go. Come right along with me.”

The second speaker was a young man with broad shoulders, and wearing clothes that were fashionable the year before. He spoke in a coaxing voice, and caught the man's hand while he was speaking, and tried to hustle the man and boy along from the corner of Division Street toward the New Bowery. The little fellow protested that he wanted to go up the Bowery to Canal Street. He clasped his father's hand with both his own, and tugged manfully in the direction he wanted to go, saying: “Come on, papa; this is the way.”

“What are ye doin'?”

The third speaker growled that question to the young man with broad shoulders. He was a stout, bow-legged person, dressed in coarse clothes, and he eyed the young man suspiciously from under the brim of a slouched hat. The young man dropped the drunken man's hand and hurried away.

The little boy was not alarmed at the overtures of the man who had gone, nor did he show any sign of gratitude to the man who had interfered; he was intent only on getting his father home. They started up the Bowery, the father staggering from one side of the walk to the other, and the little fellow clinging to his hand and encouraging him with: “Come on, papa; I know the way.”

While crossing the Bowery at Canal Street the man fell, and it seemed in the darkness to those a short distance behind as though he must have fallen on the child. They lay together in the street for a moment, but when a policeman arrived the little fellow was up and tugging at his father's hand.

“Is that your pop, sonny?” the policeman asked.

“Yes, sir; he's my father.”

“Where do you live?”

“In Mott Street—only two blocks over. Come on, papa; I know the way.”

The drunken man had got to his feet, and the little fellow led him away toward home.  
—*N. Y. Sun.*

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### DESCRIPTION.

Pure art is that which, whether it describes a scene, a character, or a sentiment, lays hold of its inner meaning, not its surface; the type which the thing embodies, not the accidents; the core or heart of it, not the accessories. As Mr. Bagehot expresses it, the perfection of pure art is "to embody typical conceptions in the choicest, the fewest accidents, to embody them so that each of these accidents may produce its full effect, and so embody them without effort." Descriptions of this kind, while they convey typical conceptions, yet retain perfect individuality. They are done by a few strokes, in the fewest possible words; but each stroke tells, each word goes home.—SHAIRP.

**Allied to Narration.**—Nearly every suggestion that has been made as to Narration applies also to Description. Indeed the two are so closely allied that each is constantly trespassing on the other, so that it is seldom easy to draw a distinct line between them. The basis of narration is action, progress; that of description is rest, abiding characteristics. But action comes from rest, and ends in it; progress depends upon characteristics, and is interesting in proportion as it develops them.

**Three Elements** enter into a complete description.

a. *Classification*: the class to which the object belongs, and the points of agreement and difference between it and other objects of the same class.

b. *Particular Features*: Its appearance, form, size, color, etc.; its locality or situation, with the time and circumstance under which you see it; its history and changes; its structure, with a description of its parts; its characteristic features, or points of special interest; its habits (if it be an animal); its kinds or varieties, etc.

every object, nor will they often be mentioned. Reflections, especially, will be introduced into the various elements of the description. But we have in mind some such general frame upon which to place more typical features of the object to be described. From Dalgleish will suggest the use of this system.

### 1. A CLOCK.

- a. An instrument for measuring and indicating time—con- glass, etc.
- b. The dial, divided into hours and minutes—smaller circles—hands—works; wheels moved by spring or weights—pendulum—its use—kinds; house clock, public clock, watch, etc.
- c. Regularity—exactness of indication—use in regulating our of punctuality.

### 2. THE HORSE.

- a. Hoofed quadruped; contrast with lion—non-ruminating:
- b. Found in a wild state in Tartary and America—long body adapted for running—durable hoofs—silken mane and tail—skin smooth and glossy—cutting teeth in front—grinders behind—whichever the bit is placed—gregarious in a wild state—feeds on grass—riding horse—racer—hunter, etc.
- c. To man, the most useful of the animals, in peace or in war etc.—qualities, easily domesticated, docile and affectionate, patient.

### 3. THE FALLS OF NIAGARA.

- a. The most gigantic known waterfalls in the world.
- b. Situated on the River Niagara, connecting Lakes Erie and Ontario—United States from Canada—twenty-two miles from Erie, fourteen of the rapids for a mile above the falls—narrowing of the channel in the mile—divided by the Goat Island.

pressions, instead of summarizing those of others: we remember listening once to an admirable lecture on the Great Pyramid, all our delight in which was suddenly dampened when the lecturer confessed that he had never been in Egypt. Hence preference should always be given to what one has not only seen, but seen with such vivid impression that one's own feelings will enter naturally and prominently into the description. Better describe a mud-puddle which one has looked at and been interested in, than the Falls of Niagara at second-hand.

For exercise, to be sure, it is often well to write about imaginary journeys. The pupil may describe the ride he would take in going from his home to Boston, New Orleans, London, Pekin. So he may describe an imaginary animal or race of beings; the appearance and circumstances of the members of his class twenty years hence; a prospective balloon-line between New York and the Cape of Good Hope. But let him use such material only for practice exercises. When it becomes important that the description should have value of its own, as a description, perhaps the first requisite is that it be of what the writer has actually seen and been impressed by.

**The Personal Element.**—In fact, the personal element in description is often its greatest charm. (See page 108.) The reader should have his sympathy roused by a warm individuality breathing through the accumulated details. Much description derives its greatest charm not merely from the fact that it receives us into the heart of the writer, but that it opens to us that heart in some especial mood, as of sadness, joy, perplexity. Even the sea and the mountains take an additional meaning when they are invested with human interest. The proper study of mankind is man; and the writer will have few readers if he describes with such analytical precision as to eliminate his own personality.

it. Something analogous to this often takes ceptions. It will often, therefore, have a bet obliquely (if I may so speak), by introducing need with the main object or event, and aff absolutely forming a part of it.—WHATELY.

And what is so rare as a day in June?  
Then, if ever, come perfect days;  
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune  
And over it softly her warm ear lays,  
Whether we look, or whether we listen,  
We hear life murmur, we see it glisten;  
Every clod feels a stir of might,  
An instinct within it that reaches and tow  
And, groping blindly above it for light,  
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;  
The flush of life may well be seen  
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;  
The cowslip startles in meadows green,  
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice  
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean  
To be some happy creature's palace;  
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,  
A-tilt on a blossom among the leaves,  
And lets his illumined being o'errun  
With the deluge of summer it receives;  
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,  
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and  
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest  
In the nice ear of Nature, which song is the best

Now is the high tide of the year,

The breeze comes whispering in our ear,  
 That dandelions are blossoming near,  
 That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,  
 That the river is bluer than the sky,  
 That the robin is plastering his house, close by ;  
 And if the breeze kept the good news back,  
 For other couriers we should not lack :  
 We could guess it by yon heifer's lowing,—  
 And hark ! how clear bold chanticleer,  
 Warned with the new wine of the year,  
 Tells all in his lusty crowing !

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how ;  
 Everything is happy now,  
 Everything is upward striving ;  
 'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true  
 As for grass to be green or skies to be blue,—  
 'Tis the natural way of living.  
 Who knows whither the clouds have fled ?  
 In the unscarred heavens they leave no wake ;  
 And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,  
 The heart forgets its sorrow and ache ;  
 The soul partakes of the season's youth,  
 And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe  
 Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,  
 Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.—LOWELL.

**Candor Essential.**—The personal element in narration is not, however, a result of direct effort. The writer who should attempt to arouse and maintain interest in himself would be insufferable. His end must be to reproduce upon others, as nearly as possible, the impressions which the object made upon him, not because it is himself they were made upon, but because his own impressions are the only criteria by which he can judge what would be the impression made upon others. Hence it is an unpardonable fault in description to describe, not the impression made upon you, but the impression you think ought to have been made upon you. (See page 49.) This produces the flattest of commonplace, as stupid as it is insincere. (Compare page 141.)

Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad" was popular, not because it

burlesqued the impressions of travellers, but because it described them. Giving a party of ordinary people of rather low tastes, and they will be as unappreciative as the persons here told about. There are men who really might remember nothing of one of the most interesting cities of Europe, except that the billiard-table they played on there was not level. Usually they don't tell of it. But Mark Twain does tell of it for his party, and thousands who have felt exactly the same, but have never dared to own it, read this book with a chuckling satisfaction that after all their own stupidity was not abnormal. It is not a thing to be proud of that these are one's impressions. But to describe them with brutal frankness gives them at least the value of genuineness, which would be wholly wanting if in their place the book were padded out with the impressions suggested as the proper thing by the guide-book.

**Note Feelings, as well as Facts.**—To describe impressions requires more than candor. Only a habit of observing and defining one's feelings, and of remembering just what they were, will enable one to reproduce them for others. But in proportion to the difficulty of this is the value of it. The majority of beholders probably have more or less consciously somewhat the same feelings which they are unable to put into words, but which will be recalled by a vivid description. To idealize these feelings, so that they shall be recognizable by the reader as his own, and yet as broader and deeper and nobler, is the highest attainment of description : it is poetry itself.

**Description of Familiar Objects most Enjoyable.**—There is this marked difference between narration and description, that while the former pleases us in proportion as the incidents are novel and unexpected, the latter interests us in proportion as we are familiar with the features described. The criticisms we prefer are of the books we have read, of the plays we have seen, of the art-galleries we have visited. The newspaper articles we select

are those that tell about the places we are familiar with, the celebration we attended, the accident we saw, the meeting we took part in. A prominent feature of the modern newspaper is its minute description of the life of people we see every day,—the omnibus-driver, the peanut-vendor, the organ-grinder, the workmen at all kinds of humble employments. In the mind as in the eye, the nearest objects are the largest.

Of course there are things better worth describing than the life of an organ-grinder; nor can the patronizing curiosity with which such an account is read be compared with the feelings inspired by Byron's "Thunder-Storm in the Alps," or Coleridge's "Hymn in the Vale of Chamouni." But such descriptions require a Byron or a Coleridge, and it is the great mistake in descriptive composition to imitate the productions of such minds without realizing any of the conditions under which such minds wrote. Byron and Coleridge put their feelings into words, but they first had to have the feelings. We cannot command such feelings, but we can at least follow such authors in candor, giving expression to our own genuine sensations, whatever they may be, and attempting nothing beyond our experience. Better get an organ-grinder's confidence and jot down what he tells us, under inspiration of no higher feeling than curiosity, than puff up and swell and burst in ridiculous attempt while being a frog to look like an ox. Our aim should be, not to be great, but to be genuine. The limitations of the former are not self-imposed, and put no obligation upon us. If we fail in the latter, we are at once silly and culpable.

**Be Specific.**—As in narration (see page 225), general terms should be avoided, and every object presented in its clearly defined individual aspect.

Everything, as I before said, in description, should be as marked and particular as possible, in order to imprint on the mind a distinct and complete image. A hill, a river, or a lake rise up more conspicuous to the fancy when some particular lake or river or hill is specified, than when the terms are left general.—BLAIR.



Individuals alone having a real existence, the terms denoting them (called by logicians "singular terms") will of course make the most vivid impression on the mind, and exercise most the power of conception; and the less remote any term is from these, *i. e.*, the more specific or individual, the more energy it will possess in comparison with such as are more general. The impression produced on the mind by a "singular term" may be compared to the distinct view taken in by the eye of any object (suppose some particular man) near at hand, in a clear light, which enables us to distinguish the features of the individual; in a fainter light or rather farther off we perceive that the object is a man; this corresponds with the idea conveyed by the name of the species; yet farther off or in a still feebler light we can distinguish merely some living object, and at length merely some object: these terms denoting respectively the genera, more or less remote. And as each of these views conveys as far as it goes an equally *correct* impression to the mind, . . . so in language a generic term may be as clearly understood.--**WHATELY.**

**Fill In the Picture.**—"In a description, on the other hand, of anything that is likely to act on the feelings, this effect will by no means be produced as soon as the understanding is sufficiently informed; detail and expansion are here not only admissible but indispensable, in order that the mind may have leisure and opportunity to form vivid and distinct ideas. For, as Quintilian observes, he who tells us that a city was sacked, although that one word implies all that occurred, will produce little if any impression on the feelings, in comparison of one who sets before us a lively description of the various lamentable circumstances. To tell the whole, he adds, is by no means to tell everything. Accordingly it may be observed that though every one understands what is meant by a wound, there are some who cannot hear a *minute* description of one without fainting. The death of Patroclus is minutely related by Homer for the interest of the reader, though

to Achilles, whose feelings would be sufficiently excited by the bare fact, it is told in two words, *Πάτροκλος κείται.*”—W<sup>HATELY</sup>.

**Heed the Perspective.**—It is the fundamental principle of picture-making that some one point shall be assumed as that upon which the eye is directed, and that the size and prominence of every object drawn shall depend upon its relation to this one point. So in word-painting, there must be an aspect of the scene clearly in mind as predominant, and other details must be selected and dwelt upon just in proportion as they contribute toward making this aspect vivid.

As I look from the window, my eye rests on innumerable objects—on thousands that I can name. It is manifest that simply to enumerate these objects would produce no picture whatever. My first thought must be, How does this scene impress me? In what aspect do I want another to view it? Then I must select such features as produce this impression, giving them prominence in proportion as they produce it; and must ignore not only such features as are common to all landscapes and have here no special significance, but such as are peculiar to this landscape, but belong to another aspect of it, so that if introduced in this description they would distract the attention.

**Build up the Picture Steadily and Systematically.**—“You will find this a good gauge or criterion of genius—whether it progresses and evolves, or only spins upon itself. Take Dryden’s Achitophel and Zimri,—Shaftesbury and Buckingham; every line adds to or modifies the character, which is as it were a building up to the very last verse; whereas in Pope’s Timon, etc., the first two or three couplets contain all the pith of the character, and the twenty or thirty lines that follow are so much evidence or proof of overt acts of jealousy or pride, or

whatever it may be that is satirized. In like manner compare Charles Lamb's exquisite criticisms of Shakspeare with Hazlitt's round and round imitation of them."—**COLERIDGE.**

An admirable illustration of this building up is afforded by Macaulay's description of Boswell (see page 216).

He first makes impressive the importance of his subject. In a prominent line of literature, Boswell is not only the first, but incomparably the first. From the start, therefore, the reader is assured that the subject is worthy of his attention; and that this thought may be forcible, no other idea is admitted into the paragraph.

Now comes the first of a series of paradoxes: this greatest of books was written by the smallest of men. Boswell was thoroughly contemptible. He had a mean and feeble intellect. He was a bore, a laughing-stock, a lick-spittle. He was so stupid as to exult in the ridicule heaped upon him. He was servile, impertinent, shallow, pedantic, snobbish, childishly vain. His weak and diseased mind made him conceitedly ostentatious of what every other man that ever lived would have hidden.

Two pages having thus been devoted to Boswell's character as a man, and that impression having been distinctly fixed, Macaulay considers him as an author. Men silly in private life have written valuable works, but they did so in spite of their weaknesses. Boswell's book is valuable because of his weaknesses. If he had not been a great fool he would never have been a great writer. It is because he had no delicacy or shame or common-sense, that he has surpassed Tacitus, and even Johnson himself.

This second paradox having been stated and impressed, Macaulay specifies. Logic, eloquence, wit, taste, all that most writers rely upon for fame, he had nothing of. His positive qualifications were only two, observation and memory. Had he been a man of sense and virtue these would have left him a commonplace man; but because he was a dunce, a parasite, and a coxcomb, they have made him immortal. This third paradox having been illustrated, we come to a fourth, that the most worthless parts of his book are the most delightful. Then comes a fifth, that in proportion to the

celebrity of the book is the degradation of the author. In fine, we have a man whose weakness made him great, and whose greatness made him contemptible.

## DESCRIBING THE WEATHER.

Fairly in the road, a man came and sat down in front of me, and turned around and faced me :

"Cold, this mornin'," he said.

I folded my *Enquirer* wherein I had been enjoying Criswill, and fanned myself with it vigorously a moment or two before I replied. Then I unbuttoned my coat ("private to editors: " it was originally a three-buttoned coat, but the exigencies of the season, the long absence from home, and the necessity of dropping something into the contribution basket every time I go to church has reduced it to the minimum of one), wiped my frigid brow with my handkerchief, and said in panting tones :

"I don't find it so."

The man looked astonished. But presently said :

"Maybe you've been a runner?"

"No," I replied. "I have been asleep for the past two hours in a sleigh."

"And ye didn't feel cold?" the man inquired.

"Man!" I said, in tones of amazement, "cold, on the 9th of June?"

"June?" he echoed, straightening up, "are you crazy? It's the 9th of January!"

"Well," I said, "it felt like the 9th of June to me."

"It's mighty fine sleighin', all the same," he said.

I told him, without a blush, that I had never seen the mud worse on Ohio roads since I could remember.

"Where on earth," he asked, in utter astonishment, "did you come from?"

"Dayton," I said.

His eyes began to creep out and look at each other over the top of his nose.

"When?" he asked.

"This mornin'," I said calmly, "since eight o'clock."

"How?" he fairly shouted.

"In a one-horse sleigh," I said.

"Sakes alive!" he shrieked "It is impossible. It's only eleven o'clock now, and Dayton is fifty-five miles away!"

"Couldn't help it," I insisted. "I left there a little over two hours ago in a sleigh, had a poor horse, drove slowly, and the mud was up to the hubs of the wheels all the way. It was as warm as May, and I hadn't seen snow enough to make a one-boy slide in 5,000 miles."

The man's hair stood on end, and he got up to start off for the other end of the car.

"If you ain't crazy, and I believe you be," he said, with grave earnestness, "you are an awful liar."

"Good man," I said, "I expect I am, but I am not a fool. I may tell startling lies, but I do not talk like an ass, and I would be thought a liar or a maniac rather than an imbecile. I do not come into a car where the thermometer marks three degrees below zero, and tell a living, breathing, intelligent, sensitive man that it is cold, just as though I was imparting some information to him. I do not watch him drive up to the train in a sleigh, spinning over the dry, crisp snow, on the smooth, perfect pikes of Ohio, and then attempt to instruct, amuse, or startle him by telling him the sleighing is good. I would rather astonish a man than bore him. If I have nothing better to tell him than some-

thing he knows already, far better than I do, my mouth is sealed, and I will never speak." In order to astonish him or startle him I may have to lie to him, but that is better than boring him. You might as well sit down and tell me that twice two is four, as to tell me that it is cold. You might as well tell me that George Washington is dead, as to tell me the sleighing is good. Go away, good man, go to sleep. I tell you it is June, there is no snow; there is dust and there are roses. It is two hundred miles from Dayton to Loveland, and I walked from the north pole this morning. Go, get thee to a nunnery, and when you can model your conversation on something besides the United States signal service reports, come and wake me up and hold me in the matchless charm of your instructive talk. I know not what course others may take, but as for me, perish the man who talks to me about the weather."

And straightway the man aroise and got him unto the after wood-box, for he was sore astonished. And as I fell into a slumber the forgotten dreams of which contain more real, valuable information than that man ever did or ever will know, I heard him opening a conversation with the taciturn brakeman by remarking:

"Cold, this mornin'!"—*Burlington Hawkeys.*



## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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**DESCRIBE WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN, p. 244.**

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### HOW TO DESCRIBE.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### PUNCTUATION.

The use of commas, semicolons and brackets supplies the place of inflections, and enables us to introduce, without danger of equivocation, qualifications, illustrations, and parenthetical limitations, which, with an English syntax, would render a long period almost unintelligible unless its members were divided by marks of punctuation.—**MARSH.**

#### I. ABSOLUTE RULES.

**Some Rules Arbitrary.**—There is among authors of repute so much diversity of usage that it is sometimes asserted there are no absolute rules for punctuation. This is a mistake. While many of the minor uses of the points, particularly of the comma, are left to the judgment and the taste of the writer, there are certain rules of punctuation that are fixed. To violate these shows, not peculiarity of taste, but ignorance. One might as well write,

Phlow sophtly phlow, bi lorn and lee,

as to omit the interrogation point at the end of a question. It is a matter, not of judgment, but of education.

The most important of these rules are the following:

**I. Every Sentence must have at the End** one of these three marks:

**a.** If the sentence asks a question, an **interrogation point (?)**.

**b.** If the sentence is exclamatory, an **exclamation point (!)**.

**c. Otherwise, a period (•).**

*a. Rosalind.*—What did he when thou saw'st him? What said he? How looked he? Wherein went he? What makes he here? Did he ask for me? Where remains he? How parted he with thee? and when shalt thou see him again?—*As You Like It.*

Art thou a pen, whose task shall be  
To drown in ink  
What writers think?  
Oh, wisely write,  
That pages white  
Be not the worse for ink and thee.—E. L. BEERS.

Cast the following sentences into the interrogative form:—

This is not the character of British justice. These are not her features. This is not her countenance. This is not her gait or mien. No!—We wait till to-morrow to be happy; there is no reason for not being so to-day. We shall not be younger. We are not sure we shall be healthier. Our passions will not become feebler, and our love of the world less.—It was not chance that produced the diurnal and annual revolution of the globe.

1. When a sentence contains several interrogative clauses that have a common relation or dependence, the interrogation point is put only at the end; as—

By sensational preaching do you mean an incoherent raving about things in general and nothing in particular; a perversion of every text; an insult of common sense; a recital of anecdotes which are untrue, and a use of illustrations which are unmeaning?

I am a Jew: hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?—*Merchant of Venice.*

2. An assertion stating a question, does not take an interrogation point; as, "I asked the question, What weapons were in possession of the prisoner."

Sometimes, however, as in the second paragraph on page 74, an interrogation mark indicates a deferent, suppliant air on the part of the speaker.

*b. Convocation without intrigue! Parliament without debate! What a lesson dost thou read to council and consistory!*—LAMB.

O many a shaft, at random sent,  
Finds mark the archer never meant!  
And many a word, at random spoke,  
May soothe or wound a heart that's broke.—SCOTT.



Cast the following sentences into the exclamatory form :—

I look round with joyful emotion and see the beauties of creation. The tints are lovely. Their combination is pleasing. The diversity of shades is admirable. In one spot there is delicacy of color ; in another brilliancy.

3. The exclamation point is used also after interjections, exclamatory words, and phrases. Also in invocations ; as—

Father of all ! in every age adored.

O Grave ! where is thy victory ?

O Death ! where is thy sting ?

Perhaps the greatest lesson which the lives of literary men teach us is told in a single word : Wait !—LONGFELLOW.

See illustrations on pages 88, 89, 103, 141, 175, 223, 229, 240.

4. Two or more exclamation points are sometimes used to express ridicule, or to intensify surprise ; as—

Malherbe observed, that a good poet was of no more service to the Church or the State than a good player *at ninepins* ! !

It is, however, usually considered in better taste to leave the reader to discover for himself that the author considers the idea preposterous. (See pages 112, 124.)

## II. A Period must also be used :

a. After every abbreviation ; as, A. Lincoln ; Aug. 6 ; 4:30 P.M.

5. If two letters are used, or two separate words, a period is put after each ; as, A.M., i.e., e.g., etc.

6. The period thus used indicates only the abbreviation, and does not dispense with other punctuation marks required except at the end of a sentence, where a period is not repeated. Thus, Groton, Mass., Aug. 28, 1847. Did he travel *incog.* ? Before his name he wrote with a flourish, " Prof."

b. After every Roman numeral, except in paging ; as, The reign of George III. was ended.

Find illustrations on page 238.

**c.** To denote omission in a quotation ; as, He writes : " Unless I hear from you . . . I shall start on Monday."

Find examples on pages 46, 85, 122, 124, 153.

7. When part of a sentence is omitted, it is customary to use three periods ; if a whole sentence or more is omitted, to use four or more.

**d.** Before decimals ; as, 3.14159 ; \$36.83 ; .0087.

8. Where the number is less than a unit, the accompanying word should be in the singular. Thus, 2.467 *miles* ; but .896 *mile*.

### III. An Apostrophe (') must be used :

**a.** To indicate the possessive case ; as, John's, men's, horses' feet.

Find illustrations on pages 78, 140, 183.

NOTE.—When the possessive is modified, the apostrophe is given to only one word ; which is,

(a) When the possessive phrase precedes the object, the *last* word.

(b) When the possessive phrase follows the object, the *principal* word. Thus :

(a) William the emperor's palace ; the empress Carlotta's bracelet.

(b) The palace was William's, the emperor ; He said the bracelet was Carlotta's, the empress ; I got the book at Tonson's ; an old established bookseller, and the publisher of many valuable works.

In the first two examples, some would regard the possessive phrase as a compound name, and write, " The palace was William the emperor's," " the bracelet was Carlotta the empress's."

On the other hand, some would give the apostrophe to the principal word, even when the possessive phrase precedes :

—"W. H. M.," *Nantucket*, begs leave to dissent from our opinion, expressed in the March number of this paper, that the phrase, " Her uncle's, Sergeant Colton, behavior," is grammatically correct, though not elegant. He does " not understand why it is quite unnecessary to put Colton in the possessive form," and proceeds to say :

"As the words 'Sergeant Colton' are explanatory, they are in apposition with 'her uncle's,' and must be parsed as in the same case. Indeed, does not the leading word, in all such sentences, determine the case of the other? Such expressions as this do not often occur in print, as we all agree that it is better to turn the phrase and insert the preposition; but here is a form which is common enough: 'Smith asked Brown to hand him his (Brown's) hat.' Here the word 'Brown's,' is parenthetical, or explanatory. It takes the possessive form because in apposition with the possessive pronoun 'his.' Surely you would not use it thus,—'His (Brown) hat.'"

Our correspondent's illustration of Smith and Brown is not quite apposite. The word "Brown's" is not descriptive merely, but distinctive; it is absolutely necessary to use it to indicate the owner of the hat. Colton, on the contrary, is merely descriptive, showing who "her uncle" is; and the sentence is equivalent to "her uncle's—Sergeant Colton, I mean—behavior." We must adhere to our original opinion that the phrase is correct; but we would not advise any one to imitate it. Take this sentence, for example: "The officer's—Captain Deane—bearing was gallant and easy; the magistrate's—Justice Coke—timid and embarrassed." Now, we ask our correspondent if this sentence is not strictly grammatical? The dashes are in effect parentheses; and the addition of *s* with an apostrophe to each of the two proper names would make it sound very unpleasantly.—*The Observer.*

For suggestions as to avoiding these cumbrous forms, see Part I.

9. Plural nouns ending in *s* take only the apostrophe; all other nouns take the apostrophe and *s*. Thus, calves' heads; Agnes's hat; oxen's hoofs.

NOTE.—In proper names ending with *s*, this rule is so often violated that the custom has developed into a certain authority, until it may be considered a matter of taste whether we shall write "Barnes' Arithmetics" or "Barnes's Arithmetics." But the former practice will always be questionable. Bigelow says:—"The possessive case, like the plural number, always makes an additional syllable where the nominative ends with the sound of *s*, and the plural syllable might as well be elided as that of the possessive. We should not think of saying 'In the time of the Charles,' and there is no more reason for saying 'The Charles' times.' The proper way to avoid a harsh or hissing sound is to reform the sentence."

It is sometimes difficult to determine whether a possessive should be singular or plural.

The superintendent of a home for boys in San Francisco, having named it the *Youths' Directory*, was overwhelmed by local grammarians with protestations against the location of the apostrophe in the word "youths." He thereupon wrote to twenty learned authorities, in various parts of the United States, to settle the question beyond dispute; but they differed not less than the Pacific coast sagas. President Barnard of Columbia College, President Eliot of Harvard, George P. Quackenbos, the author of books on rhetoric, etc., Prof. Schele de Vere of the University of Virginia, Chancellor Crosby of the New York University, Benj. W. Dwight and Prof. W. D. Whitney, pronounced "*Youths' Directory*" correct and "*Youth's Directory*" wrong; Noah Porter, President of Yale, declared "*Youth's Directory*" correct and the other wrong, and Richard Grant White and Dr. McCosh of Princeton, pronounced both correct, while President Gilman of the Johns Hopkins University sent a reply from which it was impossible to determine on which side he was.—*N. Y. Sun.*

10. Certain Scriptural phrases, like "for conscience' sake," have become established idioms, and are thus allowed to violate the rule.

11. The apostrophe is not used before *s* in ours, yours, hers, theirs, its.

**b.** To denote the plural of figures and letters; as *p*'s and *q*'s; casting out the *9*'s.

The following is less usual:

In verse 13 of chapter xlii. of Judges, *ye* and *we* are both printed with a single *e*, but in verse 15 of the same chapter, each with two *ee*.—MARRH.

12. This usage is sometimes extended to words, where there is danger of ambiguity; as, The children on the shore are always talking about their *pa*'s and their *ma*'s. See example, page 292.

**c.** To denote elision:

(I.) Of letters in a word when the abbreviation is to save space or time or rhythm (compare VI. c., page 266); as, *cont'd* for *continued*.

That opportunity  
Which then they had to take from 's, to resume  
We have again.—*Coriolanus*.

13. Such elisions should be carefully distinguished from abbreviations proper, and should not be followed by a period.

Find illustration on page 241.

(II.) Of syllables, or even of words; as, 'midst for amidst; I've for I have; 'twas for it was; 'faith for in faith; etc.

'Faith, there have been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they knew not wherefore: so that if they love they know not why; they hate upon no better ground.—*Coriolanus*.

Find illustrations on pages 81, 126, 157, 175, 240.

14. It is a usual rule, though not universal, that where two words are thus made into one, a space should be left between the

words, as though they were not abbreviated. But don't, can't, won't, and shan't are commonly printed as single words.

NOTE.—Be careful not to use don't in the third person singular, for *does n't*.

(III.) Of the century in dates; as, The spirit of '76; for the years 1883, '84.

First of November, 'Fifty-five!

This morn'ing the parson takes a drive.—HOLMES.

#### IV. A Hyphen (-) must be used :

a. Between the parts of a compound word that has not by usage become a single word.

A witness was on the stand in an illegal liquor sale case. The counsel was trying to find out in what kind of a glass the liquor was handed to the witness, and at last exclaimed: "What kind of a looking glass was it?" "Why, sor, it war not a looking-glass at all, it war a tumbler."

Correct, "For sale, one large sick chair." "James Boyle, Gas-holder and Boiler-maker."

15. This rule is absolute and acknowledged, but in practice it is imperfectly carried out because of uncertainty as to which are still compound words, and which have become single. In general the dictionaries should be consulted as final authority, but even they do not agree.

Worcester has "brickwork," "brasswork," without hyphens; "wood-work," "iron-work," with them. "Greenhouse is closed up, while "school-house" is not: "wood-house" has a hyphen, "almshouse" has none. (Wilson writes "schoolhouse.") Webster has "brick work" with, "woodwork" without the hyphen,—just reversing Worcester. Again, Worcester writes, "humblebee" and "bumblebee": Webster, under B, has "bumble-bee, . . . sometimes called humble-bee;" and, under H, writes "humblebee, . . . often called bumblebee," apparently forgetful of his previous hyphens.

To search for authority, then, in the matter of compounding words, will avail next to nothing. In a volume containing "School Committees' Reports,"—and certainly school committees ought to know many things,—we find "blackboard" and "black-board;" and, on a single page, "school books," "school-keeping," "schoolmaster," "school-houses," "school checks." "Semi-annual" is frequently printed with the hyphen, according to Webster; but Worcester has "semiannual."

Thus it appears, that, in regard to compounding (by which we mean inserting the hyphen between the parts of a compound word) the proof-reader is left to his own discretion, and can do very much as he pleases. He should, however, adopt some method

by which he can approximate to uniformity in his own work; for as to agreeing with anybody else, that is out of the question.

Perhaps as good a rule as can be laid down on this subject is to close up the word when compounding changes the accentuation; otherwise, insert the hyphen. Thus, "Quartermaster" has a different accentuation from the two words "quarter master;" therefore make one word of it, without the hyphen: "Head-assistant" is accented like the two words "head assistant,"—therefore insert the hyphen. By this rule "school-house" and "blackboard" should be severally closed up: "salt mine" takes the hyphen,—"saltsa" (adjective) does not.

The word "tree," with a prefix indicating the kind, should be compounded; as, "oak-tree," "forest-tree," "pine-tree," etc. (Webster has "whiffle-tree," Worcester "whiffletree.")

"Cast-iron" and "wrought-iron" are usually compounded, and should always be so when used as adjectives; as, "cast-iron pillars," "wrought-iron boilers."

"Temple-street place" (or "Place," according to style), "Suffolk-street District," "Pemberton-square School," are quite correct. The hyphen is too frequently omitted in such cases.—DREW.

Explain the uses of the hyphen on pages 22, 142, 146, 174, 175, 224.

**b.** At the end of a line, when one or more syllables of the last word are written upon the following line.

16. Care must be taken to divide a word only by syllables. Thus, chil-dren, not child-ren or chi-ldren.

**c.** To unite a prefix ending with a vowel to a word beginning with a vowel; as, co-operate, re-admit.

17. Instead of the hyphen, a **diæresis** (··) is sometimes placed over the second vowel; as, coöperate, reädit. Here the hyphen is preferable; but the diæresis must be used where, in words not compound, the o is repeated and forms a separate syllable; as, Laocoön, zoölogy.

## V. Quotation Marks (" ") must be used :

**a.** To enclose a quotation from another, when given in his exact words; as, John said, "I will come soon." Portia began thus :

"The quality of mercy is not strained."

Some said, "John, print it," others said, "Not so."

Some said, "It might do good," others said, "No."—BUNYAN.

18. When the quotation is not exact, but only in substance, no marks are needed ; as, John said that he would come soon ; Portia began by saying that the quality of mercy is not strained.

19. When the quotation ends the sentence, the marks are often omitted, the beginning capital showing where the quotation begins. Thus :

I knew once a very covetous, sordid fellow, who used to say, Take care of the pence ; for the pounds will take care of themselves.—CHESTERFIELD.

20. If the quotation consists of two or more paragraphs, double marks are placed at the beginning of each paragraph, but at the end only of the last. Thus :

In his address to the young ladies, Dr. Peabody said :

"The frame of mind in which a young lady says in reply to a question, '*Mercy! no,*' is very different from that which prompts the simple, modest '*no.*' Were there any room for doubt, I should have some doubt of the truth of the former answer ; for the unnatural, excited, fluttering state of mind implied in the use of the oath might indicate either an unfitnes to weigh the truth, or an unwillingness to acknowledge it.

"In fine, transparency is an essential attribute of all graceful and becoming speech. Language ought to express the speaker's ideas, and neither more nor less. Exclamations, needless epithets, unmeaning extravagance, are as untasteful as the streamers of tattered finery which you sometimes see fluttering about the person of a dilapidated belle. Let your thoughts be as strong, as witty, as brilliant as you can make them ; but never seek to atone for feeble thought by large words, or to rig out foolish conceits in the spangled robe of genuine wit."

See illustrations on pages 88, 89, 98.

21. At the close of a quotation, the quotation marks should enclose the final punctuation mark unless it is either an interrogation or an exclamation point, in which case it should come inside the quotation marks if it belongs to the quotation, but outside if it belongs to the whole sentence and not to the quotation. Thus :

Asked to make an extempore pun, Purcell inquired, "On what subject ?" "The king" was suggested. "O but the king is no subject !" was the quick reply.

The boy who told his teacher that Washington was the first man replied, when the teacher corrected him by saying that the first man was Adam, "O well, if you are talking of foreigners, I suppose he was" !

22. A quotation within a quotation has single instead of double quotation marks. Should a quotation occur within this quotation, it has double marks. Thus :

"Just then the minister interrupted. 'You remind me,' he said, of the famous sarcasm :

" "You have done good, my lord, by stealth ;  
The rest is upon record. " "—JEFFREY.

Find illustrations on pages 89, 121, 220, 228, 240.

23. Where quotations are frequent, and in complete paragraphs, the quotation marks are often omitted, and the name of the author is put at the end, as frequently in this volume. In such cases the fact of quotation is usually indicated by printing the part quoted in smaller type.

24. Quotations from foreign languages are usually printed in *italics*, without quotation marks. To indicate this in writing we *underscore* the words of the quotation.

Not a little mischief has been wrought by the famous sentiment, *Hont sott qui mal y pense.*

Find illustrations on pages 51, 52, 58, 66, 76, 83, 98, 117, 127, 178.

**b.** Usually to enclose titles of books; but names of magazines or papers are more commonly printed in *italics*.

In examining *The Atlantic*, *Nation*, *Scribner's Monthly*, *Harper's*, *Appleton's Magazine*, *Lippincott's*, *Popular Science Monthly*, *Galaxy*, *Eclectic*, *N. A. Review*, *New Englander*, *London Quarterly*, *British Quarterly*, *Westminster Review*, *Edinburgh Review*, *Contemporary Review*, *The Fortnightly Review*, we find that thirteen of these use quotation marks, and four use italics, in referring to the titles of books; eleven use italics, and six use quotation marks, in referring to magazines and papers.—COCKER.

Explain the uses of quotation marks on pages 140, 196, 197, 228, 234.

## VI. The Dash (—) must be used :

**a.** When a sentence is broken off abruptly, by interruption or otherwise. Thus :

A colonel was once complaining that from the ignorance and inattention of his officers he was obliged to do the whole duty of his regiment. Said he, "I am my own captain, my own lieutenant—" "And your own trumpeter," broke in a lady who was listening.

Find illustrations on pages 83, 87, 147.



**b.** Where the sentence is concluded in an emphatic or unexpected manner, especially by an epigrammatic turn. Thus :

Never try to tell what you don't know;—life is too short.

No one minds what Jeffrey says,—it is not more than a week ago that I heard him speak disrespectfully of the Equator.—**SYDNEY SMITH.**

Animals are such agreeable friends—they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms.—**GEORGE ELIOT.**

A moral, sensible, and well-bred man  
Will not affront me,—and no other can.—**COWPER.**

Every one is as God has made him—and oftentimes a great deal worse.—*Don Quixote.*

The pith of my system is to make the senses out of the mind,—not the mind out of the senses, as Locke did.—**COLERIDGE.**

Find illustrations on pages 72, 75, 85, 108, 238.

**c.** To show the omission of part of a word or name which one hesitates to write in full. Thus :

A newly elected Assemblyman signed the hotel register with a flourish. “I am Hon. ———, of ———,” he pompously announced to the clerk.—“That doesn't make any difference,” was the reply; “we'll treat you just as well as if you were anybody else.” Entering a lawyer's office next day, the legislator was invited to take a chair till the man of law was at leisure. “But, I am Hon. ———, of ———,” he remonstrated.—“Oh, indeed! Then take two chairs.”

Find illustrations on pages 60, 69, 74, 77.

**d.** To show faltering, or hesitation, or stammering. Thus :

Wordsworth had boasted to Coleridge that he could write just like Shakspeare if he had the mind to. “B-b-but you see that's just the tr-trouble,” suggested Charles Lamb; “he hasn't the m-m-mind.”

Find illustrations on pages 125, 273, 274.

**e.** To separate the speeches in a dialogue, when written in the same paragraph. Thus :

A cobbler at Leyden who used to attend the public disputations was asked if he understood Latin. "No," replied the fellow, "but I know which is wrong in the argument."—"How?"—"Why, by seeing which gets angry first."

**f.** To separate the title from the subject-matter, and the subject-matter from the authority for it, when both are in the same paragraph. Thus :

Notice in a Hoboken ferry-boat :—"The seats in this cabin are reserved for ladies. Gentlemen are requested not to occupy them until the ladies are seated."

Few are qualified to shine in company ; but it is in most men's power to be agreeable. The reason, therefore, why conversation runs so low at present, is not the defect of understanding, but pride, vanity, ill-nature, affectation, singularity, positiveness or some other vice, the effect of a wrong education.—SWIFT.

**g.** Between two numbers, to show that they are the extremes of a series including the numbers given and all the intervening ones ; as, pages 245-249 (not pages 245-49, or 245-9), 1776-1876, 1883-84 (not 1883-4).

For other uses of the dash, see Note 30, page 271.

Explain the uses of the dash on pages 14, 15, 24, 32, 36, 52, 58, 77, 98, 111, 113, 131, 174, 199, 209, 225, 234, 244.

NOTE.—An unfortunate habit prevails among some writers, especially public speakers, of using only the dash for punctuation, and of dividing their sentences in manuscript somewhat according to the pauses they make in reading it. To the compositor or to other readers this is usually more perplexing than no punctuation whatever. The dash should be used only where it is preferable to other points.

## **VII. The Comma (,) must be used :**

**a.** To separate from the rest of the sentence vocative expressions—the names of persons or things addressed :  
Thus :

I remain, sir, your obedient servant.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes.

Devise, wit ; write, pen : for I am for whole volumes in folio.—  
*Love's Labor Lost.*

A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk ; and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.—*Romeo and Juliet.*

Fletcher, bishop of Nismes, was the son of a tallow-chandler. A great duke endeavored to mortify the prelate by saying to him at the king's levee that he smelt of tallow. To which the bishop replied, "My lord, it is true I am the son of a chandler ; and if your lordship had been the same you would have remained a chandler all the days of your life."

25. When strong emotion is expressed, an exclamation point is sometimes required. Thus :

O Hamlet ! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.—SHAKESPEARE.

Go, wondrous creature ! mount where science guides ;

Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides.—POPE.

Dear authors ! suit your topics to your strength,

And ponder well your subject, and its length ;

Nor lift your load, before you're quite aware

What weight your shoulders will, or will not, bear.—BYRON.

Find illustration on page 78.

**b.** To separate from each other words of the same part of speech and in the same construction :

(1.) When *not* connected by conjunctions, *always* ; as, A still, small voice.

26. When two adjectives come together, the second qualifying the noun, and the first qualifying the noun as thus qualified by the second, the two adjectives are not in the same construction, and take no comma between them ; as, A spirited gray horse ; He was a brave, honest, and good old man.

NOTE.—When the first adjective modifies the second, a hyphen should connect them ; as, a red-hot stove.

27. The second and succeeding words take commas after as well as before them :

a. When the same word is repeated for emphasis ; as, Verily, verily, I say unto you.

Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.—COLERIDGE.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,  
Alone on a wide, wide sea.—COLERIDGE.

I'll give my jewels for a set of beads;  
My gorgeous palace for a hermitage;  
My gay apparel, for an a'm'sman's gown;  
My figured goblets, for a dish of wood;  
My sceptre, for a palmer's walking staff;  
My subjects, for a pair of carved saints;  
And my large kingdom, for a little grave,  
A little, little grave,—an ob-scure grave.—*Richard II.*

The living man who does not learn, is dark, dark, like one walking in the night.—MING SUM PAOU KEEN.

Find illustrations on pages 74, 106.

NOTE.—A word repeated, even with a conjunction, sometimes requires separation, that it may be more dwelt upon. Thus:

One may smile, and smile, and be a villain.—*Hamlet.*

*β.* When the words are nouns used as the subjects of a verb; as, Expostulation, indignation, were powerless.

Mistake, error, is the discipline through which we advance.—CHANNING.

(II.) When connected by conjunctions ONLY:

*α.* When the words are more than two in number; as, The deed was done nobly, bravely, and modestly.

To quote copiously and well, requires taste, judgment, and erudition, a feeling for the beautiful, an appreciation of the noble, and a sense of the profound.—BOVEE.

28. The comma is often, but erroneously, omitted before the conjunction connecting the last two words of the series. This leads to ambiguity. For example:

The following boats have arrived: Sylph, Mary and Agnes, Swan, Star and Crescent.

Now, have four boats come in, or five? If the rule is followed, the name of the last boat is "Star and Crescent;" but if the writer's punctuation is not to be depended upon, we cannot tell from the sentence as written whether this is the case, or whether he is speaking of two boats, the "Star" and the "Crescent."

Again:

Mary, Helen and Julia have come.

Does the writer mean that three girls have come, or is he telling Mary that two girls have come?

29. When the conjunction is repeated before each word of the series, the commas may be omitted when the words rather expand a common idea than introduce new ones. The more emphasis there is upon the individual words of the series, the more need there is for commas.

Hill gives an excellent illustration of this point :

And feeling all along the garden wall,  
Lest he should swoon and tumble and be found,  
Crept to the gate, and opened it, and closed.

$\beta$ . When one of the words has qualifiers that do not apply also to the others; as, He is entitled to take the annual crops, and wood for fuel.

Correct, Furs and [the] gold-dust which the natives collect from the sands of the river.—HUC.

There is a tendency to confound concepts and no unanimity as to what rhetoric and its province may be.—P. A. HALPIN.

$\gamma$ . When the words are contrasted, or emphatically distinguished. Thus,

Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;  
Strong, without rage; without o'erflowing, full.

Wit is the salt of conversation, not the food.—HAZLITT.

$\epsilon$ . To separate pairs of words joined by conjunctions; as, Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote.

Find illustration on page 216.

$\delta$ . To separate from the rest of the sentence words and phrases used in apposition, except general titles and appellations; as, He left one son, Thomas.

Time, the great destroyer of other men's happiness, only enlarges the patrimony of literature to its possessor.—I. DISRAELI.

My civic and poetical compliments to Southey if at Bristol;—

why, he is the very Leviathan of bards—the small minnow, I.—  
CHARLES LAMB.

30. Sometimes a dash shows more unmistakably that the construction is appositive; as, This point represents a second thought—an emendation. See another illustration in VII. a., above, page 268. Find others on pages 128, 141, 144.

Honor to the men who bring honor to us, glory to the country, dignity to character, release from vacuity, wings to thought, knowledge of things, precision to principles, sweetness to feeling, happiness to the fireside—authors.—BOVKE.

31. Where the appositive expression is restrictive, no comma is used; as, “Enoch Arden” was written by the poet Tennyson; Irving lived on the river Hudson.

32. Although a general title, if the appositive is modified it is preceded by a comma. Thus, Cicero the orator; but, Cicero, the greatest of Roman orators.

e. To separate from the rest of the sentence parenthetical remarks.

The word “parenthesis” (*παρά ἐν τεθείαι*) means *side-insertion*, and is used of a word or phrase inserted by way of comment or explanation in a sentence complete without it. This disconnection is more definitely shown by the use of **parentheses** [ ( ) ] or of **brackets** [ [ ] ]. But the modern tendency is to make punctuation as little obtrusive as possible, and in many cases the relation is shown with sufficient definiteness by commas, or by dashes. Indeed, it is not always easy to decide whether a phrase is parenthetical, or simply explanatory. The following illustrations will indicate which of the four points should be used in given cases.

(i.) *The comma used.*

It was, as Henry said, a shame to impose upon him,  
The tuneful Nine, so sacred legends tell,  
First waked their heavenly lyre these scenes to tell.—CAMPBELL.

33. Some other point should be preferred when the parenthetical phrase is itself divided by commas. Thus:

For all of us,—that is, John, and Maria, and I,—are agreed that it is best to remain.

34. Nor can commas be used when the parenthetical phrase requires a mark of exclamation or interrogation. Thus :

Spill not the morning (the quintessence of the day !) in recreations.—FULLER.

(II.) *The dash used.*

Words are wise men's counters—they do not reckon by them—but they are the money of fools.—HOBBS.

Our country—whether bounded by the St. John's and the Sabine, or however otherwise bounded and described, and be the measurements more or less ;—still our country, to be cherished in all our hearts, to be defended by all our hands —ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

It contained a warrant for conducting me and my retinue to Traldragdrib or Trildrogdrib, for it is pronounced both ways, as near as I can remember, by a party of ten horse.—SWIFT.

Here dashes after "Trildrogdrib" and "remember" would remove the ambiguity of the last clause.

When soft !—the dusky trees between,  
And down the path through the open green,  
Where is no living thing to be seen ;  
And through yon gateway where is found,  
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,  
Free entrance to the churchyard ground,  
And right across the verdant sod,  
Towards the very house of God ;  
—Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,  
Comes gliding in, serene and slow,  
Soft and silent as a dream,

A solitary doe !—WORDSWORTH.

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,  
Falling like dew upon a thought, produces  
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think ;  
'T is strange, the shortest letter which man uses  
Instead of speech, may form a lasting link  
Of ages ; to what straits old Time reduces  
Frail man, when paper—even a rag like this,  
Survives himself, his tomb, and all that 's his.—BYRON.

Here it would be more common to repeat the dash after "this."  
Find illustrations on pages 66, 78, 86, 89.

(III.) *Parentheses used.*

A man's body and himself (with the utmost reverence to both I speak it) are exactly like a jacket and a jacket's lining : rumple the one, you rumple the other.—SIERNE.

All knowledge, and wonder (which is the seed of knowledge) is an impression of pleasure in itself.—BACON.

Know then this truth, (enough for man to know,)  
Virtue alone is happiness below.—POPE.

The motto is, *E pluribus unum* (from many, one).

35.  $\alpha$ . If a parenthesis is inserted at a place in the sentence where no point is required, no point should be put before or after the marks of parenthesis.

See first two illustrations above.

$\beta$ . If the parenthesis is inserted at a place where a point is required,

i. If the parenthesis relates to the entire sentence, the required mark precedes the parenthesis, and the parenthetical expression is punctuated as though it stood alone. Thus :

He had two Latin words almost constantly in his mouth. (how odd sounds Latin from an oilman's lips!) which my better knowledge has since enabled me to correct. —C LAMB.

"Ay! here now! (exclaimed the Critic,) here come Coleridge's metaphysics!" —*Biographia Literaria*.

See also the third illustration above.

ii. If it relates to a single word or a short clause, no mark precedes it, and the required mark follows it. Thus :

By the intercession of his friends (who had interest at court), he obtained his release.

See examples on pages 8, 9, 83, 89, 93, 108, 121, 158, 181.

#### (IV.) *Brackets used.*

36. Brackets are preferred to parentheses for the following purposes :

$\alpha$ . To indicate that a verbal mistake is copied from an original document ; as, "He complained that he was superceded" [so in the original]. So of any remark or explanation interpolated by one in quoting from another ; thus, on page 51, the words "the Duke of Marlborough," inserted by way of explanation, not by Thackeray but by the author of this volume, should have been printed between brackets instead of parentheses, while eight lines below the parentheses are correct, having been inserted by Thackeray himself.

$\beta$ . To enclose statements of things done which would not appear in a report of the verbal proceedings alone ; as, "Is this [handing a pistol to the witness] the weapon he had in his hand?"

"The gentleman says I'm dr-drunk. [Laughter.] W-well, I am drunk: I-I know I'm drunk: b-but I shall get over that. But the gentleman him-self is a born idiot [rising on tiptoe, and pointing at him unsteadily, and swinging his arms], and he'll n never get over that!" [Loud applause and laughter.]



Find illustrations on pages 89, 234.

**γ.** When a parenthesis occurs within a parenthesis, brackets should be substituted for the outside pair. Thus :

As for the person aggrieved [I mean (do not mistake me) the original owner], he was basely defrauded.

**f.** Usually, to indicate ellipsis. Thus :

Homer, Cortland Co., N. Y., Aug. 16, 1883.

Alpheus Harkins, Esq., 27 Liberty St., Boston, Mass.

He started, July 10, for Washington.

The ellipsis most frequently indicated by the comma is that of a verb that has been once expressed. Thus :

Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtile; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.—BACON.

But the comma need be inserted only when the meaning would otherwise be obscure. Thus :

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.—BACON.

Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.—BACON.

Since brevity is the soul of wit,  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
I will be brief.—*Hamlet*.

**g.** To introduce quotations too short or informal to need the colon.

(I.) The comma used.

To Lamb, habitually unpunctual, the head of the office observed, "Really, Mr. Lamb, you come very late." "Y-yes," stammered Lamb, "b-but consider how early I go."

(II.) The colon used.

Remember the epigram of Disraeli: "Like all great travellers, I have seen more than I remembered, and remembered more than I have seen."

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## CHAPTER XV.

### PUNCTUATION—*Continued.*

The principles of punctuation are subtle, and an exact logical training is requisite for the just application of them. Naturally, then, mistakes in the use of points, as of all the elements of language, written and spoken, are frequent; so much so, in fact, that in the construction of private contracts, and even of statutes, judicial tribunals do not much regard punctuation; and some eminent jurists have thought that legislative enactments and public documents should be without it.—MARSH.

#### II. RULES DEPENDENT UPON JUDGMENT.

*A Marked Distinction.*—While some of the rules already given allow latitude to differences of interpretation, and even of taste, most of them are rigid. One violates them at the peril of being misunderstood, and with the certainty of being looked upon as defective in education. Though his sentences be constructed with the utmost simplicity, a writer can hardly fail to need every direction that has been given.

We come now to more uncertain ground. *The difficulty of punctuation as an art, and the diversity in usage, are mostly confined to the division of sentences by commas.* It is a general rule that these divisions are to aid the eye in comprehending the construction of the sentence. As to what is the construction of a sentence, what are the relations of the parts to each other, and how these relations may best be indicated by punctuation, judgment and taste differ so widely that no absolute rules can be laid down.

Adverbial phrases, for instance, are to be separated only when they break the connection. But when do they break the connection? To one man, grasping easily the sentence as a whole, no ordinary phrase is an interruption. To another, who works out the meaning little by little, each group of words requires individual study. The latter may be obliged to insert with a lead-pencil a dozen points which the author has thought unnecessary. On the other hand, a rapid reader may feel clogged by a succession of commas that are to him unnecessary and annoying.

Take, for instance, this sentence from "Green's History of the English People" (Harper's edition, iii. 227):

In spite of this Charles had throughout the year been intriguing with the Confederates through Lord Glamorgan; and though his efforts to secure their direct aid were for some time fruitless he succeeded in September in bringing about an armistice between their forces and the army under the Earl of Ormond which had as yet held them in check.

Here is a sentence without a comma that many writers would have divided by commas after *this*, *had*, *year*, *Confederates*, *were*, *time*, *fruitless*, *succeeded*, *September*, *Ormond*, *had*, *yet*—no less than twelve commas for which rules can be found in most treatises on punctuation, and no one of which, if all were inserted, could be called an error.

On the other hand, the sentence as it stands must be pronounced faultless. It is perspicuous, easily read, easily understood. The only possible misconception would be as to the last relative clause. It is an accepted rule that a relative clause not separated by a comma is restrictive. Applying that rule here, it might be inferred that there was some other army under the Earl of Ormond that had not held them in check. But as it happens, Mr. Green follows the rule to use *that* to introduce restrictive clauses, and *which* to introduce those that modify without restricting; hence he makes the distinction clear without punctuation. There is therefore in this sentence the liberty under rules to use any number of commas from none to twelve. Surely there is nothing absolute in rules so variously construed.

It should be remarked, however, that only care in the arrange-

ment of clauses makes it possible to dispense with punctuation. Construct the sentence as follows, and no one of the twelve commas can be spared :

Charles had been intriguing, in spite of this, through Lord Glamorgan, throughout the year, with the Confederates ; and he succeeded, though his efforts were fruitless to secure their direct aid, for some time, in bringing about an armistice, in September, between their forces and the army which, as yet, under the Earl of Ormond, had held them in check.

HE PUNCTUATES BEST WHO NEEDS TO PUNCTUATE LEAST.—A comparison of the two sentences just given will impress upon the reader a principle of composition than which no other is more important :—*The less punctuation a sentence needs, the more clear and effective it is.*

This does not mean that all sentences are to be short, with one subject and one predicate. Delicate shades of meaning often require complicated sentences. Our statement is, not that an unpunctuated sentence is better than another sentence which requires considerable punctuation, but that a given sentence is improved when, by a re-arrangement of its clauses, fewer punctuation marks are required. These marks are often, and rightly, called "stops." To a certain extent they are interruptions of the flow of the sentence. The notion that they indicate where one reading aloud is to pause, either for breath or for emphasis, was long ago given up. They are simply aids to unravel a tangled sentence. What can be clearer than that a sentence should be as little tangled as possible ?

For the peace of mind of thousands of women who are wretched cooks, the writer of the following paragraph should so have arranged his clauses as to escape being at the mercy of a careless printer who drops a comma :

An unfortunate wife was killed at Troy, N. Y., while cooking her husband's breakfast in a fearful manner.

Punctuation may remove an ambiguity, but will never produce

that peculiar beauty which is perceived when the sense comes out clearly and distinctly by means of a happy arrangement.—KAMES.

The introduction of marks of punctuation into Latin manuscript was specially favored by the inflexible character of the Latin language, which inexorably demands a periodic structure, and, like a true pedagogue, pedantically insists that the reader shall parse every word in order to master the sentence. Once employed they become indispensable. Beginning with air-bladders we never learn to swim without them. Every parenthesis must have its landmarks, every turn of phrase its finger-post. We think by commas, semicolons and periods, and the free movements of a Demosthenes or a Thucydides are as unlike the measured, balanced tread of a modern orator or historical narrator, as the flight of an eagle to the lock-step of a prison convict, or to the march of a well-drilled soldier, who can plant his foot only at the tap of the drum. We are not content with a punctuation which marks the beginning and end of a period, separates its members, and distinguishes parenthetical qualifications. We require that it shall indicate the rhetorical character of the sentence. If it is vocative, ejaculatory, optative, interjectional, it must hoist an explanation point as a signal. If it is hypothetical or interrogative, it must announce itself by a mark of interrogation; and the Spaniards carry the point so far, that, in their typography, these signs precode as well as follow the sentence.—MARSH.

### VIII. The Comma may be used :

a. *To separate from the rest of the sentence, adverbs, adverbial conjunctions, and short adverbial clauses ONLY when they break the connection.*

#### (i.) *Commas required :*

There is, therefore, a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue.—BURKE.

In strict justice, perhaps, he should be punished.

Wit, like money, bears an extra value when rung down immediately it is wanted. Men pay severely who require credit.—JERROLD.

You shall see them on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall meander through a meadow of margin.—SHERIDAN.

#### (ii.) *Commas not required :*

Therefore there is a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue.

Perhaps in strict justice he should be punished.

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.—POPE.

A little nonsense now and then  
Is relished by the best of men.

Silence when nothing need be said is the eloquence of discretion.—BOVEE.

The systematic study of the mother tongue, like that of all branches of knowledge which we acquire, to a sufficient extent for ordinary purposes, without study, is naturally very generally neglected.—MARSH.

Here the commas after "acquire" and "purposes" merely clog the flow of thought, making the idea less distinct.

Special changes of vocabulary can frequently be explained, after they have once happened, but very seldom foretold.—MARSH.

Here the "after they have [once] happened" is closely connected with the "explained," the whole expression "explained after they have happened" corresponding with the single word "foretold." Hence the comma after "explained" obscures the sense.

Find other illustrations on page 220. See "therefore," page 327.

(III.) *Commas used or not, according to preference:*

Words indeed are but the signs and counters of knowledge, and their currency should be strictly regulated by the capital which they represent.—COLTON.

Beneath the rule of men entirely great  
The pen is mightier than the sword.—BULWER.

The thoughts that come unsought, and, as it were, drop into the mind, are commonly the most valuable of any we have, and therefore they should be secured, because they seldom return again.—LOCKE.

When I read rules of criticism, I inquire immediately after the works of the author who has written them, and by that means discover what it is he likes in a composition.—ADDISON.

(IV.) *Commas used or not, according to meaning:*

Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,  
When thought is speech, and speech is truth.—*Marmion*.

Here to insert a comma after age, would mean that the age when thought is speech covers the entire period from boy to youth,

while to omit it would mean that this age is restricted to a period somewhere between boy and youth, but not covering the entire time.

He endeavored in every possible way to undermine his rival.

As unpunctuated, or with commas after "endeavored" and "way," the "every possible way" would signify that his endeavors were of every kind. A comma after "endeavored" would indicate that the undermining was to be of every possible kind. In other words, the first punctuation would throw the emphasis upon the methods employed; the latter, upon the results obtained.

*The Toast as Given.*—"Woman: without her, man is a savage."

*The Toast as Read.*—"Woman, without her man, is a savage."

A barber's sign read as follows:

What do you think  
I'll shave you for nothing, and give you a drink.

Strangers would mentally punctuate it as follows:

What do you think!  
I'll shave you for nothing, and give you a drink.

But after being attended to, they were assured that the meaning was as follows:

What! do you think  
I'll shave you for nothing, and give you a drink?

37. *Adverbs distinguished from Conjunctions.*—Many words ranked as adverbs are sometimes employed conjunctively, and require a different treatment in their punctuation. When used as conjunctions, *however, now, then, too, indeed*, are divided by commas from the context; but when as adverbs, qualifying the words with which they are associated, the separation should not be made. This distinction will be seen from the following examples:

1. **HOWEVER.**—We must, *however*, pay some deference to the opinions of the wise, *however* much they are contrary to our own.

2. **NOW.**—I have *now* shown the consistency of my principles; and, *now*, what is the fair and obvious conclusion?

3. **THEN.**—On these facts, *then*, I *then* rested my argument, and afterwards made a few general observations on the subject.



4. *Too*.—I found, *too*, a theatre at Alexandria, and another at Cairo; but he who would enjoy the representations must not be *too* particular.

5. *INDEED*.—The young man was *indeed* culpable in that act, though, *indeed*, he conducted himself very well in other respects.

When placed at the end of a sentence or a clause, the conjunction *too* must not be separated from the context by a comma; as, "I would that they had changed voices *too*."—WILSON.

**b.** *To separate the subject from the predicate, ONLY when:*

(I.) The subject ends with a verb; as, Whatever is, is right.

(II.) The subject is so long and involved that it is difficult to see where it ends and the predicate begins. Thus:

The voice of praise, *too*, coming from those to whom we had thought ourselves unknown, has a magic about it that must be felt to be understood.—LEVER.

He who comes up to his own idea of greatness, must always have had a very low standard of it in his mind.—HAZLITT.

He that will lose his friend for a jest, deserves to die a beggar by the bargain.—FULLER.

To write much, and to write rapidly, are empty boasts. The world desires to know what you have done, and not how you did it.—LEWES.

He that cometh in print because he would be known, is like the fool that cometh into the Market because he would be seen.—LYLY.

There are few delights in any life so high and rare as the subtle and strong delight of sovereign art and poetry; there are none more pure and sublime. To have read the greatest work of any great poet, to have beheld or heard the greatest works of any great painter or musician, is a possession added to the best things of life.—SWINBURNE.

Discretion of speech is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably to him with whom we deal, is more than to speak in good words, or in good order.—BACON.

My tongue within my lips I rein.

For who talks much, must talk in vain.—GAY.

38. Whether it is difficult to see where the predicate begins is usually a matter of judgment.

Find examples on pages 49, 147, 187.

Usually the comma should be omitted unless its need is manifest. Thus :

A wise man in the company of the ignorant has been compared by the sages to a beautiful girl in the company of blind men.—**SAADI**.

Sometimes, however, ambiguity is manifest, and unless the sentence is reconstructed the comma *must* be used.

39. Sometimes, especially in contrasted expressions, a comma may be inserted to compel attention to each member of the sentence ; as, Mind unemployed, is mind unenjoyed.—**BOVEM**.

40. When the subject consists of several clauses, especially when each ends with a semicolon, the last commonly ends either with a comma followed by a dash, or with a colon, and all the clauses are summed up in some one word or expression.

There is scarce a village in Europe, and not one university, that is not furnished with its little great men. The head of a petty corporation, who opposes the designs of a prince who would tyrannically force his subjects to save their best clothes for Sundays . the puny pedant, who finds one undiscovered quality in the polypus, or describes an unheeded process in the skeleton of a mole, and whose mind, like his microscope, perceives nature only in detail : the rhymist, who makes smooth verses and paints to our imagination, when he should only speak to our hearts,—all equally fancy themselves walking forward to immortality, and desire the crowd behind them to look on.

A pickpocket in every car ; a cheat at every station ; every third switch on the road misplaced ; the danger of being hurled from the track, and then burned alive : these considerations prevent my travelling on the railroad of which you speak.

When you know a thing, to hold that you know it ; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it : this is knowledge.—**CONFUCIUS**.

Style ! style ! why, all writers will tell you that it is the very thing which can least of all be changed. A man's style is nearly as much a part of him as his physiognomy, his figure, the throbbing of his pulse,—in short, as any part of his being which is least subjected to the action of the will.—**FENELON**.

It is no proof of a man's understanding to be able to confirm whatever he pleases ; but to be able to discern that what is true is true, and that what is false is false : this is the mark and character of intelligence. — **EMERSON**.

There are three friendships that are advantageous, and three that are injurious. Friendship with the upright ; friendship with the sincere ; and friendship with the man of observation : these are advantageous. Friendship with the man of specious aims ; friendship with the insinuatingly soft ; and friendship with the glib-tongued : these are injurious.—**CONFUCIUS**.

Find examples on pages 50, 84, 85, 96, 217.

c. *To separate the object from the predicate ONLY* when without it there would be manifest ambiguity. Thus :

Friends to whom you are in debt, you hate.—WYCHERLEY. Without the comma, it might be the friends who were hated, or the debt.

d. *Before the first "that"* in clauses introduced by "It is said that," "I answer that," etc., when there are several propositions in the same construction. Thus :

It was a cutting remark of Sheridan's, that a certain speaker was indebted to his imagination for his facts, and that he relied upon his memory for his wit.

Philosophers assert, that Nature is unlimited in her operations, that she has inexhaustible treasures in reserve, that knowledge will be always progressive, and that all future generations will continue to make discoveries of which we have not the slightest idea.

41. After nouns like *maxim, rule, fact, law, principle, etc.*, a single proposition may take a comma before the *that* ; as, It is an old maxim, that fast bound is fast found.

42. Where such a proposition is introduced by the verb *to be*, a comma is usually inserted before the *that*. Thus :

Let our object be, our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country.—WEBSTER.

There is, first, the literature of knowledge ; and, secondly, the literature of power. The function of the first is, to teach ; the function of the second is, to move : the first is a rudder ; the second an oar or a sail. The first speaks to the mere discursive understanding ; the second speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding or reason, but always through affections of pleasure and sympathy.—DE QUINCY.

43. When the introductory clause is long, it makes the proposition more definite and emphatic to insert the comma ; as, It is the ruin of all the young talent of the day, that reading and writing are simultaneous.—MRS. FLETCHER.

e. *To separate co-ordinate clauses*, where each thought demands distinct, but not emphatically distinct, consideration ; as, Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.—BACON.

It is only in the separation of co-ordinate clauses that there is any reason in the old rule of counting one for a comma, two for a semicolon, three for a colon, and four for a period. In this use of the marks, the author indicates the time he wishes each individual thought of a series to receive by the importance of the points by which he separates them. Thus, to quote a familiar line from Tennyson,

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,

the use of the comma distinguishes the two ideas, but does not emphatically contrast them. If the line were written,

Knowledge comes ; but wisdom lingers,

the mind would be compelled to dwell a moment longer on the contrast. If it were written,

Knowledge comes : but wisdom lingers,

the contrast would be still more marked. If it were written,

Knowledge comes. But wisdom lingers,

or,

Knowledge comes.—But wisdom lingers,

the reader would feel that the author meant to give this thought all possible emphasis. Or if, again, it were written,

Knowledge comes but wisdom lingers,

the effect would be somewhat that of repeating a familiar proverb, remembered as a whole, without care to distinguish its connection of thought.

Where so much depends upon a shade of meaning, more can be learned from example than from precept ; so in place of arbitrary rules we give a number of typical sentences.

(i.) *No point used.*

A student of punctuation should ask himself *why* in a given case to *put in* a stop rather than why to leave one out ; for the insertion of unnecessary stops is, on the whole, more likely to mislead a reader than is the omission of necessary ones.—A. S. HILL.

Here the contrast requires a comma between *stop* and *rather*.

It is in general more profitable to reckon up our defects than to boast of our attainments.—CARLYLE.

The true use of speech is not so much to express our wants as to conceal them.—  
GOLDSMITH.

(ii.) *The comma used.*

Where nature's end of language is declined,  
And men talk only to conceal their mind.—YOUNG.  
E'en copious Dryden wanted, or forgot,  
The last and greatest art, the art to blot.—POPE.  
For rhetoric he could not ope  
His mouth, but out there flew a trope.—*Hudibras.*

Conceit may puff a man up, but never prop him up.—RUSKIN.

The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.—*As You  
Like It.*

Occasions do not make a man frail, but they show that he is.—THOMAS À KEMP S.

His face was without form and dark, the stars dim twinkled through his form.—  
OSIAN.

Master books, but do not let them master you. Read to live, not live to read.—  
BULWER.

His heart was as great as the world, but there was no room in it to hold the memory  
of a wrong.—EMERSON.

It is not always the depth or the novelty of a thought which constitutes its value to  
ourselves, but the fitness of its application to our circumstances.—SEWELL.

No great genius was ever without some mixture of madness, nor can anything grand  
or superior to the voice of common mortals be spoken except by the agitated soul.—  
ARISTOTLE.

The mind never unbends itself so agreeably as in the conversation of a well chosen  
friend. There is indeed no blessing in life that is any way comparable to the enjoyment  
of a discreet and virtuous friend. It eases and unloads the mind, clears and improves the  
understanding, engenders thought and knowledge, animates virtue and good resolutions,  
soothes and allays the passions, and finds employment for most of the vacant hours of  
life.—ADDISON.

God be thanked for books. They are the voices of the distant and the dead, and  
make us heirs of the spiritual life of past ages. Books are the true levellers. They give  
to all who will faithfully use them the society, the spiritual presence of the best and  
greatest of our race. No matter how poor I am, no matter though the prosperous of my  
own time will not enter my humble dwelling. If the sacred writers will enter and take  
up their abode under my roof, if Milton will cross my threshold to sing to me of Para-  
dise, and Shakspeare, to open to me the worlds of imagination and the workings of the  
human heart, and Franklin to enrich me with his practical wisdom, I shall not pine for  
want of intellectual companionship, and I may become a cultivated man though excluded  
from what is called the best society, in the place where I live.—CHANNING.

Find other illustrations on pages 45, 128.

(iii.) *The semicolon used.*

Some must watch, while some must sleep ;  
So runs the world away.—*Hamlet.*

Men's evil manners live in brass ; their virtues we write in water.—SHAKSPEARE.

Learning without thought is labor lost ; thought without learning is perdition.—  
CONFUCIUS.

What the great man seeks is in himself ; what the small man seeks is in others.—CON-  
FUCIUS.

Gossip is a sort of smoke that comes from the dirty tobacco-pipes of those who diffuse  
it ; it proves nothing but the bad taste of the smoker.—GEORGE ELIOT.

The sublime and the ridiculous are often so nearly related, that it is difficult to class  
them separately. One step below the sublime makes the ridiculous ; and one step above  
the ridiculous makes the sublime again.—PAINÉ.

44. *Clauses that are themselves divided by commas should be  
divided from each other by semicolons.* Thus :

Words learned by rote a parrot may rehearse,  
But talking is not always to converse ;  
Not more distinct from harmony divine  
The constant creaking of a country sign.—COWPER.  
We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow ;  
Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.—POPE.

English is an expressive language, but not difficult to master. Its range is limited ; it  
consists, as far as I can observe, of four words, " nice," " jolly," " charming," and some  
grammarians add " fond."—DINWAELE.

The orator persuades and carries all with him, he knows not how ; the rhetorician  
can prove that he ought to have persuaded and carried all with him.—CARLYLE.

Equality is the life of conversation ; and he is as much out who assumes to himself  
any part above another, as he who considers himself below the rest of the society.—  
STEELE.

Whatever be the number of a man's friends, there will be times in his life when he has  
one too few ; but if he has only one enemy, he is lucky indeed if he has not one too many.  
—BULWER.

There is no harm in being stupid, so long as a man does not think himself clever ; no  
good in being clever, if a man thinks himself so, for that is a short way to the worst  
stupidity.—MACDONALD.

A slender acquaintance with the world must convince every man that actions, not  
words, are the true criterion of the attachment of friends ; and that the most liberal pro-  
fessions of good-will are very far from being the surest marks of it.—WASHINGTON.

In literature quotation is good only when the writer whom I follow goes my way, and,  
being better mounted than I, gives me a cast as we say ; but if I like the gay equipage so  
well as to go out of my road, I had better have gone afoot.—EMERSON.

When self-esteem expresses itself in contempt of another, be it the meanest, it must  
be repellant. A flippancy, frivolous man may ridicule others, may controvert them, scorn  
them ; but he who has any respect for himself seems to have renounced the right of  
thinking meanly of others.—GOETHE.

Poetry, above all, we should have known long ago, is one of those mysterious things  
whose origin and developments never can be what we call explained ; often it seems to  
us like the wind, blowing where it lists, coming and departing with little or no regard to  
any the most cunning theory that has yet been devised of it.—CARLYLE.

Find illustrations on pages 107, 157, 223, 235, 246. Notice  
neglect of this rule on pages 216-219, 227.

(iv.) *The colon used.*

Great things astonish us, and small dishearten : custom makes both familiar.—DE LA  
BRUYÈRE.

45. *Clauses that are themselves divided by semicolons may be divided from each other by colons.* Thus :

Think all you speak ; but speak not all you think ;  
Thoughts are your own ; your words are so no more ;  
Where Wisdom steers, wind cannot make you sink ;  
Lips never err, when she does keep the door.—DELAUNE.

In friendships some are worthy, and some are necessary ; some dwell hard by, and are fitted for converse ; nature joins some to us, and religion combines us with others ; society and accidents, parity of fortune, and equal disposition, do actuate all our friendships : which of themselves and in their prime dispositions are prepared for all mankind according as any one can receive them.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

Find illustrations on pages 68, 97, 121, 234, 250. Notice neglect of this rule on pages 216–219.

46. Hence the colon is especially adapted to separate from other clauses a clause that summarizes them.

There are but two ways of paying debt : increase of industry in raising income, increase of thrift in laying out.—CARLYLE.

It is with books as with men : a very small number play a great part ; the rest are confounded with the multitude.—VOLTAIRE.

Find illustrations on pages 14, 210, 213.

47. But when clauses that expand a thought are introduced by *namely, to wit, as, thus, etc.*, a semicolon precedes and a comma follows these introductory words. Thus :

As for jest, there be certain things which ought to be privileged from it ; *namely*, religion, matters of state, great persons, any man's present business of importance, any case that deserveth pity.—BACON.

Even when *namely* or the like word is omitted, the semicolon is retained if the structure remains the same. Thus :

Incivility is not a vice of the soul, but the effect of several vices ; of vanity, ignorance of duty, laziness, stupidity, distraction, contempt of others, and jealousy.—DE LA BRUYÈRE.

Correct the sentence from Legouvé, page 151.

(v.) *The sentence divided into two or more sentences.*

There is no such thing as a dumb poet or a handless painter. The essence of an artist is that he should be articulate.—SWINBURNE.

Just as it may cost a strong man less effort to carry a hundred-weight from place to place at once, than by a stone at a time ; so, to an active mind it may be easier to bear along all the qualifications of an idea and at once rightly form it when named, than to first imperfectly conceive such idea and then carry back to it, one by one, the details

and limitations afterward mentioned. While conversely, as for a boy, the only possible mode of transferring a hundred-weight, is that of taking it in portions; so, for a weak mind, the only possible mode of forming a compound conception may be that of building it up by carrying separately its several parts.—HERBERT SPENCER.

**f.** *To set off Dependent Clauses*, when the connection is not close.

(1.) *Relative Clauses, when not restrictive.* Introduced by the *Divisible Relative*. (See Part I., Adjective Sentences.)

Usage on this point is so uniform that the comma should be omitted only by those who so construct their sentences as to use very few commas. (See page 277.) It is commonly understood that he who writes,

The scholar, who loves his books, is to be envied,

uses the word *scholar* in a general sense, implying that all scholars love their books and are to be envied; while to say

The scholar who loves his books is to be envied,

is to *restrict* the predicate to that kind of scholar who does love his books, implying that there are scholars (in this case using the word in the sense of *pupil*) who do not love their books. In the first case, the relative clause is descriptive, mentioning one of the characteristics of a scholar, in a clause that might be omitted without changing the essential statement. In the second case, the relative clause is restrictive, not to be omitted without changing the meaning. Hence the observance of this distinction is of great importance. There are laws on many statute books, the effect of which has been either lost or perverted, because they were drawn by legislators unfamiliar with this principle. (See page 297.)

*Restrictive clauses.* Introduced by the *Indivisible Relative*.

There is no true orator who is not a hero.—EMERSON.

Wit consists in knowing the resemblance of things that differ, and the difference of things that are alike.—DE STAËL.

Education alone can conduct us to that enjoyment which is at once best in quality and infinite in quantity.—MANN.



Every school-boy and school-girl who has arrived at the age of reflection ought to know something about the history of the art of printing.—MANN.

Only the refined and delicate pleasures that spring from research and education can build up barriers between different ranks.—DE STAËL.

They are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts.—SIDNEY.

Those who live on vanity must not unreasonably expect to die of mortification.—MRS. ELLIS.

But far more numerous was the herd of such  
Who think too little, and who talk too much.—DRYDEN.

But every page having an ample marge,  
And every marge enclosing in the midst  
A square of text that looks a little blot.—TENNYSON.

The art of quotation requires more delicacy in the practice than those conceive who can see nothing more in a quotation than an extract.—I. DISRAELI.

There is a great deal of unmapped country within us which would have to be taken into account in explanation of our gusts and storms.—GEORGE ELIOT.

Find illustrations on page 73.

48. Even before restrictive clauses a comma is necessary, when the relative is separated from its antecedent and likely to be connected with some other word. Thus :

He is a fool,  
Who only sees the mischiefs that are past.—BRYANT'S *Iliad*.

### *Clauses not restrictive.*

There were very few passengers, who escaped without serious injury.

This means that all the passengers were saved. Omit the comma, and the meaning is that nearly all the passengers were injured.

Men of great conversational powers almost universally practise a sort of lively sophistry and exaggeration, which deceives, for the moment, both themselves and their auditors.—MACAULAY.

The things which are seen are temporal.  
The man who laughed loudly was the thief.

The above restrictive clauses may be thus converted into non-restrictive :

Things, which are seen, appeal more directly to the child than words, which are only heard.

He handed it to the man, who laughed loudly and tossed it in the air.

*Clauses restrictive and non-restrictive in the same sentence.*

It was the necessity which made me a quarrier, that taught me to be a geologist.—  
HUGH MILLER.

When it is the head of the family, who is usually the bread-winner, that is laid prostrate.

It is this exclusively national spirit, and the undisguised contempt for other people, that the English are so accustomed to express in their manner and conduct, which have made us so generally unpopular on the Continent.—H. MATTHEWS.

Flesh is but the glass which holds the dust that measures all our time, which also shall be crumbled in dust.—GEORGE HERBERT.

49. The same distinction in relative clauses should be observed in the choice of the relative pronoun. In restrictive clauses, *that* should be used instead of *which*, or *who*.

In Worcester's Dictionary, some specifications are made under this rule, as follows :

"There are cases in which *that* is properly used when applied to persons, instead of *who*: 1st. When it follows the interrogative *who*, or an adjective in the superlative degree; as, 'Who *that* has any sense of right would reason thus?' 'He was the oldest person *that* I saw.' 2d. When it follows the pronominal adjective *same*; as, 'He was the same man *that* I saw before.' 3d. When persons make but a *part* of the antecedent; as, 'The man and things *that* he mentioned.' 4th. After an antecedent introduced by the expletive *it*; as, 'It was I, not he, *that* did it.'"

Abbott gives these exceptions :

(a) When the antecedent is defined, *e.g.* by a possessive case, modern English uses *who* instead of *that*. It is rare, though it would be useful, to say "His English friends *that* had not seen him" for "the English friends, or those of his English friends, *that* had not seen him."

(b) *That* sounds ill when separated from its verb and from its antecedents, and emphasized by isolation: "There are many persons *that*, though unscrupulous, are commonly good-tempered, and *that*, if not strongly incited by self interest, are ready for the most part to think of the interest of their neighbors." Shakespeare frequently uses *who* after *that* when the relative is repeated. See "Shakespearian Grammar," par. 390.

(c) If the antecedent is qualified by *that*, the relative must not be *that*. Besides other considerations, the repetition is disagreeable. Addison ridicules such language as "That remark *that* I made yesterday is not *that that* I said *that* I regretted *that* I had made."

(d) *That* cannot be preceded by a preposition, and hence throws the preposition to the end. "This is the rule *that* I adhere to." This is perfectly good English, though sometimes unnecessarily avoided. But, with some prepositions, the construction is harsh and objectionable, *e.g.* "This is the mark *that* I jumped *beyond*." "Such were the prejudices *that* he rose *above*." The reason is that some of these dissyllabic prepositions are used as adverbs, and, when separated from their nouns, give one the impression that they are used as adverbs.

(e) After pronominal adjectives used for personal pronouns, modern English prefers *who*. "There are many, others, several, those, *who* can testify, etc." [Here there is good authority the other way.]

(f) After *that* used as a conjunction there is sometimes a dislike to use *that* as a relative. See (c).

The distinction in the use of *that* as a restrictive is comparatively modern. Blair (Lecture xx.) censures Addison for writing, "A man of a polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures *that* the vulgar are not capable of receiving," saying, "In some cases we are indeed obliged to use *that* for a relative in order to avoid the ungraceful repetition of *which* in the same sentence. But when we are laid under no necessity of the kind, *which* is always the preferable word."

The following examples are quoted from Hodgson's "Errors in the Use of English :"

It is quite clear that it is not the last weight raised which regulates the weight of the letter; but the weight of the letter which regulates which is the last weight which will be raised.—H. D. MACLEOD. (Of these four "whiches," all but the third should be "that.")

There is probably no one of this generation who bestows any thought upon the problems of history and politics, who will not acknowledge his indebtedness to Mr. Carlyle.—*London Times*. (Here Mr. Hodgson corrects the second "who" to "that;" but strictly both "whos" should be "thats," and euphony would preserve the second "who" rather than the first.)

So in page 16, next line to last, "that" might well be changed to "which" on account of the "that" in the line following.

The crisis is one of the most singular which [that] have ever occurred.—*Economist*.

It was this which [that] made his sect so feared and hated among certain classes in Rome.—W. W. STORV.

But next to the novelty and originality of these tales, it was their matchless force and vigor which [that] magnetically attracted the reading world.—ELZE.

Going back to the illustrations of the use of the comma in relative clauses, page 289, under *Restrictive Clauses*, in the quotation from Emerson "that" should be substituted for "who." In the first quotation from Mann, "which" is preferred to "that," because another "that" has just preceded "enjoyment." In the second quotation from Mann, "who" should be "that." The second word in the quotation from Mrs. Ellis should be "that," and in the second line from Dryden "as" should in both places be substituted for "who." In the last line from Tennyson, to omit the comma and use "that" throws the emphasis upon *blot*, while to insert a comma after "text" and substitute "which" for "that," would leave the emphasis upon *text*, making the last clause a descriptive after-thought. Disraeli should have written "that" instead of "who," and if George Eliot retained "which," she should have put the comma before it. In that case the emphasis of

thought would lie upon the statement that there is an unmapped country within us, while to omit the comma and substitute "that" for "which" would throw the emphasis upon the idea of explanation. As it stands, the sentence is therefore ambiguous. Under *Clauses restrictive and non-restrictive*, page 291, in the quotation from Matthews "that" and "which" should be transposed.

Make corrections on pages 75, 81, 216-219.

With these hints, the student should be able to discriminate as to the use of the relatives; and he is urged to observe with reference to this rule all relative clauses he encounters, until the distinction becomes habitual.

Find errors under this head on pages 5, 34, 41.

The caution so often given should here be repeated, that this discrimination is for the student's own use—not for criticism of the usage of others. The careful writer and speaker will be sure that his restrictive pronoun is "that," except when the previous use of "that" as an adjective pronoun would make "who" or "which" more euphonious. But he will not pronounce a sentence ungrammatical that violates this rule; for if he did he might be confronted with examples from almost every noted writer of English: with the entire quotation from Macaulay (pages 216-219), for instance.

(ii.) Other Dependent Clauses except when so short or so immediately connected with what precedes and follows that the meaning is unmistakable.

As has been remarked, the ideal sentence is so arranged that it requires the minimum of punctuation. In some sentences the arrangement is so faulty that punctuation cannot remove the ambiguity. Thus:

"Biddy," said a lady to her servant, "I wish you would step over and see how old Mrs. Jones is this morning." In a few minutes Biddy returned with the information that Mrs. Jones was seventy-two years, seven months, and twenty eight days old.

Every School and College in the United States should have a copy of "Comstock's Colored Chart" hanging on its walls, for the instruction of its pupils, which will be supplied at 20 per cent. off of retail price, or \$4.00 each.

The rising tomb a lofty column bore.—POPE.

And thus the son the fervent sire addressed.—POPE.

He takes young children in his arms,

And in his bosom bears,

In other sentences unusual punctuation may be required to make perspicuous a sentence ambiguously worded. Thus :

— Not only Jesuits can equivocate.—*DRYDEN.*

Here a comma after “only” will make the meaning that there are other facts besides the fact that Jesuits can equivocate. But a comma after Jesuits will make the meaning that others besides Jesuits can equivocate.

Again :

Young Itylus, his parents' darling joy,  
Whom chance misled the mother to destroy.—*POPE.*

Here a comma after “misled” will indicate that Itylus destroyed his mother ; a comma after “mother,” that the mother destroyed Itylus.

Again :

Solomon, the son of David who { built the temple at Jerusalem, } was the richest  
monarch that ever reigned. { was persecuted by Saul, }

Here to make the upper clause of the brace applicable, a comma must be inserted before “who ;” to make the lower clause applicable the comma must be omitted, though in this case the “who” should properly be “that.”

The following sentences, awkward and inelegant as they are, may be made by punctuation to express their intended meaning unmistakably :

He said I could not make mince-pies like his mother.

I perceived it had been scoured with half an eye.—*The Guardian.*

It has not a word but what the author religiously thinks in it.—*POPE.*

Mr. Dryden makes a very handsome observation on Ovid's writing a letter from Dido to Æneas in the following words.—*The Spectator.*

Wanted : a man to fit boots of a good moral character.

The barber was shot while shaving a customer with a brass-barrelled pistol.

The following lines were written more than fifty years ago by one who has for many years slept in his grave merely for his own amusement.

Instead of purity resulting from that arrangement to India, England itself would soon be tainted.—*MACAULAY.*

The purpose is to bring the act stated into prominence.—*ALFORD, quoted by MOON.*

I have noticed the word “party” used for an individual occurring in Shakspeare.—*Id.*

I remember when the French band of the “Guides” were in this country reading in the *Illustrated News*.—*Id.*

These shrieks, as they are called, are scattered up and down the page by compositors without any mercy.—*Id.*

A man does not lose his mother now in the papers.—*Id.*

The Greeks, fearing to be surrounded on all sides, wheeled about and halted with the river on their backs.—*GOLDSMITH.*

In an examination in the House of Commons in 1819 a member said that "the witness had been ordered to withdraw from the bar in consequence of being intoxicated by the motion of an honorable member."—*GRAHAM.*

Her body being picked up was carried to the residence of her brother where she lived in an express wagon.

In one evening I counted twenty-seven meteors sitting on my back-piazza.

The remains were committed to that bourne from which no traveller returns accompanied by his friends.

There are some defects which must be acknowledged in the dictionary.

Wanted, a young man to take care of a horse of temperate and industrious habits.

Wanted: a saddle horse for a lady weighing about 950 pounds.

"Is there a gentleman with one eye named Walker in the club?"—"I don't know; what was the name of his other eye?"

Mr. Robinson's daughter was run over by a market wagon three years old with sore eyes and copper-toed shoes that never spoke afterward.

We have two school-rooms large enough to accommodate three hundred pupils one above the other.

"I don't want your paper any longer," wrote an angry subscriber.—"I wouldn't make it any longer if you did," replied the editor, "for it would involve a new press."

There is a gift beyond the reach of art of being eloquently silent.—*BOVER.*

Just when the comma may be omitted, and just when it is necessary to make clear the relations of dependent clauses, only individual judgment as to the sentence involved can determine. Here are a few illustrations.

### i. *The comma used.*

A compliment is usually accompanied with a bow, as if to beg pardon for saying it.—*J. C. and A. W. HARE.*

Method is not less necessary in ordinary conversation than in writing, providing a man would talk to make himself understood.—*ADDISON.*

Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it.—*CHARLES LAMB.*

His tongue

Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear

The better reason, to perplex and dash

Maturest counsels.—*MILTON.*

I've never any pity for conceited people, because I think they carry their comfort about with them.—*GEORGE ELIOT.*

It is style alone by which posterity will judge of a great work, for an author can have nothing truly his own but his style.—*I. DISRAELI.*

Immodest words admit of no defence,

For want of decency is want of sense.—*ROSCOMMON.*

50. Clauses denoting cause or result are frequently introduced by the colon, instead of the comma. Thus :

Let him be kept from paper, pen, and ink :  
So may he cease to write and learn to think.—PRIOR.

With my friend I desire not to share or participate, but to engross his sorrows ; that by making them my own, I may more easily discuss them : for in mine own reason, and within myself, I can command that which I cannot entreat without myself, and within the circle of another.—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

ii. *The comma omitted.*

A man may write at any time if he set himself doggedly to it.—JOHNSON.  
A man may be as much a fool from the want of sensibility as the want of sense.—  
MR. JAMISON.

It is much easier to be critical than to be correct.—DISRAELI.

Explain the use of all the commas on page 156.

Insert punctuation marks where required in the following paragraphs, keeping in mind that proper names and sentences begin with capital letters, and that the first personal pronoun is always a capital letter.

I.

A little way below the great fall the river is comparatively speaking so tranquil that a ferry-boat plies between the canada and american shores for the convenience of travellers when i first crossed the heaving flood tossed about the skiff with a violence that seemed very alarming but as soon as we gained the middle of the river my attention was altogether engaged by the surpassing grandeur of the scene before me i was now within the area of a semicircle of cataracts more than three thousand feet in extent and floated on the surface of a gulf raging fathomless and interminable majestic cliffs splendid rainbows lofty trees and columns of spray were the gorgeous decorations of this theatre of wonders while a dazzling sun shed refulgent glories upon every part of the scene surrounded with clouds of vapor and stunned into a state of confusion and terror by the hideous noise i looked upwards to the height of one hundred and fifty feet and saw vast floods dense awful and stupendous vehemently bursting over the precipice and rolling down as if the windows of heaven were opened to pour another deluge upon the

earth loud sounds resembling discharges of artillery or volcanic explosions were now distinguishable amidst the watery tumult and added terrors to the abyss from which they issued the sun looking majestically through the ascending spray was encircled by a radiant halo whilst fragments of rainbows floated on every side and momentarily vanished only to give place to a succession of others more brilliant looking backwards i saw the niagara river again become calm and tranquil rolling magnificently between the towering cliffs that rose on either side and receiving showers of orient dew-drops from the trees that gracefully overarched its transparent bosom.

## II.

There was not the smallest accident that befell king charles the second in his exile but cromwell knew it perfectly well a gentleman who had served the unfortunate charles the first desired leave of cromwell to travel and obtained it on condition that he would not see charles stuart on arriving at cologne however the gentleman broke his promise and sent a message to the exiled king requesting that he might wait on him in the night which was granted having discoursed fully on the affairs of his mission he received a letter from the king which he concealed within the crown of his hat and then took his leave on his return to england he waited on cromwell with confidence and being asked if he had punctually performed his promise he said he had but said cromwell who was it that put out the candles when you spoke to charles stuart this unexpected question startled him and cromwell proceeding asked him what he said to him to which the gentleman answered he said nothing at all but did he not send a letter by you replied the protector the gentleman denying this also cromwell took his hat from him drew out the letter and had the unfortunate messenger committed to the tower.

### Illustrations of the Importance of Correct Punctuation: (*† Arrangement*) v. p. 357.

IN DUBLIN.—An ingenious expedient was devised to save a prisoner charged with robbery, in the Criminal Court at Dublin. The principal thing that appeared in evidence against him was a confession, alleged to have been made by him at the Police Office, and taken down in writing by a police officer. The document purporting to contain this self-criminating acknowledgment was produced by the officer, and the following passage was read from it:



"Mangan said he never robbed but twice  
"Said it was Crawford."

This, it will be observed, has no mark of the writer's having any notion of punctuation, but the meaning he attached to it was that

"Mangan said he never robbed but twice ;  
"Said it was Crawford."

Mr. O'Gorman, the counsel for the prisoner, begged to look at the paper. He perused it, and rather astonished the peace officer by asserting that so far from its proving the man's guilt, it clearly established his innocence.

This, said the learned gentleman, is the fair and obvious reading of the sentence :

"Mangan said he never robbed.  
"But twice said it was Crawford."

This interpretation had its effect on the jury, and the man was acquitted.

IN BALTIMORE.—A monthly magazine, in the midst of a very valuable and elaborate article, makes the following serious but very stupid criticism :

"It is possible that the following, taken from the edicts of the Association of Superintendents on the organization of asylums, may throw some light on the means taken to secure appointments. At a meeting held in Baltimore, May, 1863, the following resolution was adopted : 'The Board of Trustees should be composed of individuals distinguished for liberality, intelligence, and active benevolence ; *above all, political influence.*' It is not singular that the American system should become a reproach to us, when such a proposition is to be found among the articles of," etc., etc.

The four words in italics having a comma in their midst, are made to say just what the board did not say, and did not intend to say ; and the critic, unless intensely prejudiced, must have seen it. The meaning was that the board should be composed of men "above all political influence," in order that appointments may be made impartially and on merit only. The little comma makes the mischief.—*New York Observer.*

IN VERMONT.—The Constitution of the State of Vermont, as printed in the general statutes and other official publications for over eighty years, declares that "the Governor, and in his absence, the Lieutenant-Governor" (in the original Constitution it was the Governor and Council), "shall have power to grant pardons and remit fines, in all cases whatsoever, except in treason and murder, in which they shall have power to grant reprieves, but not to pardon until after the end of the next session of the Assembly." This seems to say, distinctly, that the Governor shall not have power to pardon traitors and murderers until after the end of the next session of Assembly ; and by implication it would seem to follow that he may pardon murderers after a session has intervened. The question as to what the Constitution really means in this matter came up in conversation between several gentlemen in the State Library at Montpelier the other day. Mr. Abell, of West Haven, was of the opinion that the Constitution did not intend to give the power of pardon to the Governor at any time in cases of treason and murder, and he found in a volume of Vermont reports an opinion of Judge Williams to that effect. The point was speedily settled by the production by the State Librarian of the first printed copy of the Constitution (printed at Hartford, Conn., in 1779) in which a comma plainly appears after the word "pardon," in the sentence quoted. This makes all clear. The words "but not to pardon" are plainly parenthetical, and the meaning is as plain as if it read : he shall have power to grant reprieves (but not to pardon) until after the end of the next session ; or he shall have power to grant reprieves until after the end of the next session, but not to pardon. When the Constitution was next printed, a year or two later, the comma was omitted, doubtless by a careless proof-reader, and from then till now our Constitution has never been correctly printed.

*is really illustrates the importance of the correct arrangement of words still more than of correct punctuation. Commas, however omitted in printing & reprinting books, but the order is hardly liable to change. LXXXIX - XCi -*

In legal & constitutional documents, & in general where  
it is ~~not~~ precision is of primary importance, the rule  
should in no case be allowed to depend upon hushua  
merely, but words, phrases, & clauses should be so  
CHAP. XV.] IMPORTANCE ILLUSTRATED. 299  
that the meaning cannot be mistaken.

This is not the first case in which a careless omission or substitution of a comma has made an important difference with the meaning and construction of a law. The act of 1870, providing for the abolishing of school districts, as drawn, required each town in the State to take action in the next March meeting on the question whether it would substitute the town system for the district system. The Legislature intended that each town should have the subject up in town meeting and take definite action upon it; but a blundering engrossing clerk put in a comma where none belonged, and the act as passed left it optional with the selectmen to put an article in the warnings in reference to the school systems or not. And in point of fact not a dozen towns in the State acted on the question.—*Burlington Free Press.*

IN NEW YORK.—In answer to the question, What was the effect of the decision upon the future of the case? Mr. Wakeman produced the affidavit on which Dr. Lambert was convicted, and read it thus: "T. S. Lambert, President, and James Cruikshank, Secretary of the American Popular Life Insurance Company, being duly sworn, depose and say, and each for himself says, that they are the above-described officers of the said company, and that on the thirty-first day of December last all the above assets were the absolute property of the said company, free and clear from any liens or claims thereon, except as above stated; and that the foregoing statement, with the schedules and explanations hereunto annexed and by them subscribed, are a full and correct exhibit of all the liabilities and of the income and disbursements and of the general condition and affairs of the said company on the said thirty-first day of December last, and for the year ending on that day, according to the best of their information, knowledge, and belief respectively."

Mr. Wakeman then said: "You would not think that a man was convicted of perjury and sentenced to State prison on that little document, and all because the jury made a semicolon act as a full point." Pointing to the semicolon between the words "as above stated" and "and that the foregoing statement," the counsel said: "The jurors who had tried Dr. Lambert agreed that that concluded a sentence, and that the last sentence of the affidavit, 'according to the best of their knowledge,' etc., did not qualify the preceding sentence; but I have had the satisfaction of proving my point, which was that the last sentence covered the whole of the affidavit, and that as Dr. Lambert did not make the accounts up himself, but left it to the proper clerks, these accounts were, to the best of his knowledge and belief, correct."

"Will this decision interfere with the theories of the prosecution in a new trial?"

"To be sure it will, if there is a new trial; but I think the decision of the Court of Appeals, which amounts to a full acquittal, will so upset those who worked this case up that another judicial investigation will not be wanted, and my client will be discharged from prison; besides, as soon as the District Attorney gets through with the opinions and I can digest them, I intend to make a motion for his discharge or enlargement on bail."—*New York World.*

ON 'CHANGE.—Into the action, the original question of the guilt or innocence of Mr. Sewell does not enter. It is the regularity or irregularity of the action of the Governing Committee and the officers of the Exchange thereupon which is at issue, and practically may be called a question of a comma. It all hinges on the reading of Article XX. of the Constitution of the New York Stock Exchange, which is:

Should any member be guilty of obvious fraud, of which the Governing Committee shall be the judge, he shall, upon conviction thereof, by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the said committee present, be expelled, and his membership shall cease to the Exchange; subject, however, to the provisions of Article XIV. of the Constitution as regards the claims of members of the Exchange, who are creditors of such persons.

John L. Logan, Mr. Sewell's lawyer, discussing the case, said :

“ It is a plain question of law only. We claim that the plain meaning of Article XX. is that it requires a vote of two-thirds of the Governing Committee present to convict a member of obvious fraud, and that no such vote was had in Mr. Sewell's case. There was simply a majority vote on his conviction. The two-thirds vote obtained was on his expulsion. In their answer the defendants admit every material point claimed by us except the legal one which we make as to the construction of that article. From our point of view no person conversant with the English language can doubt that our reading is the correct one.” . . . Robert Sewell, who represents the Stock Exchange, said : “ We contend that to a proper understanding of Article XX. the words *upon conviction thereof* are entirely superfluous, and upon well-grounded rules of grammatical construction, the verb *shall* governs *be expelled*, so that it might read, *shall by a vote of two-thirds of the said committee present, be expelled.*”—*New York Sun.*

*only way to insure all doubts would be to restate the law in more definite terms.*

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

### RULES DEPENDENT ON JUDGMENT.

#### VIII. The Comma may be used—

- a. To separate adverbial phrases that break connection, p. 279.
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  - ii. Commas not required, p. 279.
  - iii. Commas used or not according to taste, p. 280.
  - iv. Commas used or not according to meaning, p. 280.
37. Adverbs distinguished from conjunctions, p. 281.
- b. To separate the subject from the predicate, ONLY when—
  - i. The subject ends with a verb, p. 282.
  - ii. The subject is long and involved, p. 282.
38. Use of the comma sometimes imperative, p. 283.
39. Comma sometimes compels attention, p. 284.
40. Punctuation of a subject of several clauses, p. 283.
- c. To separate the object from the predicate, ONLY to relieve from manifest ambiguity, p. 284.
- d. Before “that,” introducing several propositions, p. 284.
  41. Before “that” after “maxim,” “rule,” “fact,” etc., p. 284.
  42. Before “that” after the verb “to be,” p. 284.
  43. Before “that” when the introductory clause is long, p. 284.
- e. To separate co-ordinate clauses, where each thought is distinct, p. 284.

- i. No point used, p. 285.
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  45. Clauses divided by semicolons are separated by colons, p. 288.
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- f. To set off dependent clauses when the connection is not close, p. 289.
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PART IV.

**THE ESSAY**

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## PART IV.

### *THE ESSAY.*

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#### CHAPTER XVI.

##### PREPARATION.

Speak not at all in anywise until you have somewhat to speak; care not so much for the reward of your speaking, but simply and with undivided mind for the truth of your speaking.—CARLYLE.

**Reproduction vs. Creation.**—Thus far the student has been directed toward the expression of ideas already conceived. In Conversation one gets new thoughts; he develops and defines his own: but the material he uses is the accumulation of his previous life, the sum-total of his culture to the moment of speaking; instruction can do little more than help him to make this material available. In Letter-Writing, and in Narration and Description carried beyond correspondence into more formal literature, the material is still experience—what one has seen and heard and felt. The most one can hope is perfectly to reproduce.

But in the Essay one creates. The first task is not to express ideas, but to get them. The essay is at basis a judgment. To describe intelligently an occurrence or a



scene, one needs principally to have observed keenly, and to have remembered discriminatingly. But to write an essay, one should be thoroughly acquainted with the subject itself and with what others have said of it, should have pondered it, should have reached a definite opinion, and should be able to maintain that opinion. This involves another and a higher set of faculties, a different and a more difficult labor.

#### SELECTING A SUBJECT.

**PROPER SUBJECTS FOR COMPOSITION.**—Hence the early compositions of pupils should be based on narration and description. Abstract general topics are meaningless to them. Few first efforts of the kind have the vigor of one recalled at an Oberlin commencement :

*About Virtue.*—Virtue is a good thing to get a holt of. Whenever a feller gets a holt of virtue, he better keep a holt.

*Bombastic Commonplaces.*—Many pupils put together a composition as they would a bouquet, seeking in memory or in books for elegant phrases to arrange, and as little undertaking to originate an idea as to construct a moss-rose. Hence the humorist does not need to exaggerate when he calls the following “Phonographic Echoes from Commencement.”

Man is the architect of his own fortunes. In all the sweeping currents of human events, in all the aspirations and ambitions of other ages, how nobly—

*Night brings out the stars.* [It also brings out the bugs, but the essay neglected to say so.—ED.] It is only when *sorrow* and *misfortune* have darkened our lives that the *brighter* traits of character, the *God-like* instincts of man's *nature* shine *forth* amid the surrounding *gloom*, like—

The press and the ballot-box, the great palladium of human liberty, what power is theirs in moulding the national characteristics, what has been their influence as agents of civilization, what do we see—

As we glance back across the wide unfolding centuries that stretch between us and the buried ages of the past, how the ruins and wrecks of the grandeur of man in his proudest estate, in his—

Life, like a mighty river, springing in unseen fountains deep in some mountain glen, meandering, a ceaseless sparkling rivulet, through verdant meadows and adown many steepes, and at length—

To-day we stand upon the threshold of life, ready to cross it with impatient feet, and as we strain our eyes to pierce the curtain of the future, our hearts tell us that—

What man has done, man can do. All that the past has taught us, all that the lives of the great and good in other ages have done for us, all that the pages of history, in the stormy times of old—

Thucydides, towering high above ordinary men in an age that counted among its leaders and teachers such poets and artists and statesmen as Sophocles and Æschylus, Phidias, Zeuxis and Parrhasius, Herodotus and Xenophon, Thucydides, himself great among the great, is said to have remarked—

But what, let us ask ourselves, were the motives of Alexander in these brilliant achievements? When we consider that no other conqueror ever effected so much in so short a time, and when we reflect that the only motive that led him to carry war and bloodshed and terror into almost every part of the then known world, was cold, selfish, inhuman ambition, we are led to exclaim with the immortal Washington—

"Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate." And although often we would fain penetrate the veil of the future, yet at length, in the wisdom of riper years, taught in the rugged school of experience, we yield to—

Man, helpless in himself, untaught by the instinct of the lower animals, incapable in his natural condition of protecting himself, a prey to the elements and at the mercy of the beasts of the field, yet aided, developed, and elevated by the creating art of his own brain and the skill of his own hands, he is found—

Among the ancient Greeks, where wisdom, statesmanship, and art have been handed down to us through the centuries, it was considered one of the highest and first duties of the citizen to provide for—

Woman, heaven's last, best gift to man, what is her mission? What is the life-work waiting for her earnest, patient hands? The hand that rocks the cradle truly may shake the world; her strength is gentleness, her courage is confidence, and she walks—

On the broad ocean of life we launch our bark fearlessly; we face the storms as we welcome the sunlight, and serene and confident amid the changing currents and baffling winds, we spread our sails and boldly hold our—

Knows he, who knoweth himself, the first principles of human knowledge? The man who—

Blows the wind never so ill that it blows no good to some one. Across the broad ocean of life, into our very faces the tempests may howl, but the fearless sailor meets the storm and calmly trims his—

Corn is king. To-day more than ever before, the agricultural interests of the country are overshadowing all others, until as we contemplate them in their immensity—

We say farewell. To you, whose patience and wisdom has led us with gentle hands along the dizzy steeps of learning's hill, and to you, dear classmates, whose cheerful—  
*Burlington Hawk-eye.*

*Familiar Subjects.*—Moreover the narration and description should be about what immediately concerns or has impressed the pupil.

Sympathy with childhood will keep ever in mind that the youthful imagination is eager, active, but limited. This last fact is important, but it is often forgotten. Some verses which have been the rounds of the newspapers illustrate it:

I was sitting in the twilight,  
 With my Charley on my knee  
 (Little two-year-old, forever  
 Teasing, "Talk a 'tory, please, to me")—  
 "Now," I said, "talk me a 'tory,"  
 "Well," reflectively, "I'll 'mence.  
 Mamma, I did see a kitty,  
 Great—big—kitty, on the fence."  
 Mamma smiles. Five little fingers  
 Cover up her laughing lips.  
 "Is oo laughing?" "Yes," I tell him,  
 But I kiss the finger tips,  
 And I say, "Now, tell another."  
 "Well," all smiles, "now I will 'mence.  
 Mamma, I did see a doggie,  
 Great—big—doggie, on the fence."  
 "Rather similar, your stories,  
 Aren't they, dear?" A sober look  
 Swept across the pretty forehead,  
 Then he sudden courage took,  
 "But I know a nice, new 'tory,  
 'Plendid, mamma! Hear me 'mence.  
 Mamma, I—did—see—a—elfunt,  
 Great—big—elfunt, on the fence!"

Active and bold as is little Charley's imagination, it is limited. Cat, dog, and elephant are all sitting on the fence.

Moreover, children's ideas of the relations of things are of the vaguest, as their interminable questions are continually showing.

One day I sat in a car seat on the Saugus branch of the Eastern road behind a pale, care-worn lady who was taking a little boy from Boston to Malden. As the little boy was of a very inquiring mind, and everything seemed to attract his attention, I could not help listening to some of his questions.

"What is that, auntie?" the little boy commenced, pointing to a stack of hay on the marsh.

"Oh, that's hay, dear," answered the care-worn woman.

"What is hay, auntie?"

"Why, hay is hay, dear."

"But what is hay made of?"

"Why, hay is made of dirt and water and air."

"Who makes it?"

"God makes it, dear."

"Does he make it in the day-time or in the night?"

"In both, dear."

"And Sundays?"

"Yes, all the time."

"Ain't it wicked to make hay on Sunday, auntie?"

"Oh, I don't know. I'd keep still, Willie, that's a dear. Auntie is tired."

After remaining quiet a moment, little Willie broke out:

"Where do stars come from, auntie?"

"I don't know; nobody knows."

"Did the moon lay 'em?"

"Yes, I guess so," replied the wicked lady.

"Can the moon lay eggs, too?"

"I suppose so. Don't bother me!"

A short silence, when Willie broke out again:

"Benny says oxins is an owl, auntie; is they?"

"Oh, perhaps so!"

"I think a whale could lay eggs—don't you, auntie?"

"Oh, yes; I guess so," said the shameless woman.

"Did you ever see a whale on his nest?"

"Oh, I guess so."

"Where?"

"I mean no. Willie, you must be quiet; I'm getting crazy!"

"What makes you crazy, auntie?"

"Oh, dear, you ask so many questions."

"Did you ever see a little fly eat sugar?"

"Yes, dear."

"Where?"

"Willie, sit down on the seat and be still or I'll shake you. Now, not another word!"

And the lady pointed her finger sharply at the little boy, as if she was going to stick it through him.

There are 8,000,000 little boys like Willie in the United States.—*Brocton Gazette*.

This is shown by the inconsecutiveness characteristic of compositions on any but thoroughly familiar subjects. Thus:

#### THE ELEPHANT.

The elephant is very large and weighs four or five pounds. He is so strong that he can carry a trunk, and people build houses on his back. His legs are as large as pillows, and his trunk is made of knife-handles and other things carved out of ivory. He is very wild and fierce, and he is easily frightened by the sight of man, but he can climb up a tree. He is also very tame.

#### THE FARRAGUT PAGEANT.

Farragut Pageant was a very wise man and a great war man too, he would fight the battle the best of any man, and most always he spent his time on the sea.

Admiral Farragut he was an officer of the navy, he was very much respected by his men he died a good christain his Family to prese-ion of his furnel he was laid in his resting last friday,—lovingly bear the nation's dead in battle or peace he was still the same ever most true to his countrys call all honor to farraguts noble name loved by the lovely reverd by all tenderly lay him down to rest scatter sweet flowers oer his breast droop the proud banner he bravely defendel Boom the loud gun for the noble lofe ended.

*Suggestions.*—An experienced teacher says: "The wise composition teacher will strive to enlist in behalf of his own depart-

ment the pleasure and delight of acquisition so natural to youth. His way to accomplish this is clear, but not always easy. He must know what things his boys and girls will take pleasure in finding out, and must be able to guide them to the sources of knowledge. Then he must catch the favorable moment, when some interesting item of knowledge is in the pupil's mind, in its nascent state, and secure a composition. The main thing in a good composition is that it be original and spontaneous. Therefore give the pupil something to discover; and while the discovery is still fresh, and his mind is still warm with it, let him report. . . .

"I have had good compositions written on such themes as these:—I have invited my pupils to explore the interesting features of Boston, its antiquities, its hospitals, its charities, its museums, and to report to the class what they had learned. This takes them out of a Saturday forenoon or afternoon, and almost invariably makes a gush of material for a composition. Such compositions have an interesting objective character. They are flavored with the realities of life. One pair of girls—they usually go in pairs of course—at the Historical Society's rooms last year met the Mayor, who took an interest in their errand and showed them memorable attentions. Another pair, at the old State House, were frightened to find the Bostonian Society in session, but nevertheless they were made welcome and were shown everything. They have been even so far as Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth, and have enlarged their knowledge in the most legitimate way. When Rev. Edward E. Hale took a class of them out to Concord, composition matter was created in unmanageable quantities. In the hospitals their sympathies were moved. So also in the institutions for the relief of poverty, for the care of infants, for the protection of the helpless. These girls are to become women. The knowledge of most worth to women is not all conveyed in the school curriculum. Some little true glimpse of life and its realities they can get in this way.

"In the pleasant months pupils should be encouraged to get their themes out of doors. What is the Bussey Institution? What are the Middlesex Fells? A Search for Hepaticas, or for Arbutus: How to Show Boston to a Stranger: Parker Hill: Historical Reminiscences of my Walk to School, etc., etc."

**The Topic to be Discussed.**—It is a general rule that the subject should be something in which one already has a real interest. Indeed, it will seem more practical if one has already a pronounced opinion upon it, especially an opinion that has met with opposition. Thus, whether it has improved the game of base-ball that every pitch is either a “call” or a “strike”; whether it is worth a boy’s while to go to college; whether the modern circus is a benefit to the public; whether Jo was the best worth knowing of the “Little Women;” whether the horse-cars ought to run on Sunday: questions like these, which have been topics of discussion already, will assume a reality in the essay that would be wanting to themes further removed from the pupil’s daily thought.

On the other hand, care must be taken that these topics receive a treatment neither personal nor trivial. While the subject should be associated as closely as practicable with the pupil’s daily life and thought, it should never lack dignity. It may be upon an every-day subject, but it should call forth the pupil’s best effort.

**Literary and Historical Subjects** have a certain advantage, providing the book or the event be thoroughly familiar. No one can study carefully the story of Charles I. without forming an opinion as to whether or not it was right to execute him. If the reading has been extensive enough, it will prove an interesting and profitable task to meet upon either side of the question the arguments brought forward on the other. But such topics must be limited and specific.

I would not assign to a girl of fifteen as a theme for a composition, “Ignatius Loyola,” and then advise her to consult Ranke’s “History of the Popes” to get the needed information. The girl of fifteen, as I know her, would not do more than transfer something from Ranke to her own pages: she would care nothing for

Loyola. You would get a composition ; you would mark it ; but you must have been asleep if you thought it did the girl any good.

The composition must first of all be original. Therefore the theme must be such as high-school youth can treat originally. I saw a girl the other day in her home making a composition on "John Milton"—a very bad kind of theme. She held in her left hand Brooke's "Milton" and in her right her pen. The mental process that was going on was not *composition*. The reason why John Milton was a bad theme was that it was too vast. Unless prevented by vigilant supervision, pupils will even write on authors of whose works they have read nothing, drawing solely from encyclopædia articles and similar sources.

Pupils ought to learn the ethics of authorship. There is no rule requiring an essay to be brilliant : but it must be honest. A pupil writes, *e.g.*, on Goldsmith's "Traveller." She remarks that "the Traveller is the most ambitious of all Goldsmith's poems," and yet she has not read another one. This affectation of generalizing taints many a juvenile production. The exercise becomes morally injurious unless the teacher reproves and prohibits such transgressions, calling them by their right names.—S. THURBER.

The obvious and the only preventive of the evils which I have been speaking of is a most scrupulous care in the selection of such subjects for exercises as are likely to be interesting to the student, and on which he has (or may with pleasure, and without much toil, acquire) sufficient information. Such subjects will of course vary, according to the learner's age and intellectual advancement ; but they had better be rather below, than much above him ; that is, they should never be such as to induce him to string together vague general expressions, conveying no distinct ideas to his own mind, and second-hand sentiments which he does not feel. He may freely transplant indeed from other writers such thoughts as will take root in the soil of his own mind ; but he must never be tempted to collect dried specimens.—WHATELY.

**How to Subdivide a Subject.**—One of the first habits to be acquired is that of examining a subject in different aspects, and selecting some feature limited enough in scope to be treated intelligently within a given limit.

CLAUDE'S "TOPICS."—The following "Topics to Open Sources of Observation" are often quoted from the "Essay on the Composition of a Sermon," by the Rev. John Claude :

1. "Rise from species to genus," or from particulars to generala.
2. "Descend from genus to species," or from generala to particulars.
3. "Remark the divers characters of a vice which is forbidden, or a virtue which is commended," *i.e.*, the qualities, characteristics, and concomitants of vices and virtues.
4. "Observe the relation of one subject to another."
5. "Observe whether some things are not supposed which are not expressed," *e.g.*, when we speak of a change, the terminus from which necessarily supposes the terminus to which, and so the reverse.
6. "Reflect on the persons speaking or acting," on their office, country, education, name, character, etc.
7. "Reflect on the state of the persons speaking or acting," *i.e.*, the condition, or circumstances, or mood of mind of the person.
8. "Remark the time of a word or action," including the time when a precept is to be observed.
9. "Observe place."
10. "Consider the persons addressed."
11. "Examine the particular state of the persons addressed."
12. "Consider the principles of a word or action," *i.e.*, from what motive, affection, passion, or conviction, the person spoke or acted.
13. "Consider consequences," *i.e.*, the uses or abuses of a doctrine, the applications or perversions, the influence or tendency of truths, errors, etc.
14. "Reflect on the end proposed in an expression or action," *i.e.*, the aim, purpose, or scope of it.
15. "Consider whether there be anything remarkable in the manner of speaking or acting," *e.g.*, "More than conquerors," "Before Abraham was, I am," etc.
16. "Compare words and actions with similar words and actions," *i.e.*, those of the same person on different occasions.
17. "Contrast words and actions," of different persons by way of antithesis.
18. "Examine the grounds or causes of an action or expression; and show the truth or equity of it."
19. "Remark the good and bad in expressions and actions."
20. "Suppose things."
21. "Guard against objections."
22. "Consider characters of majesty, meanness, infirmity, necessity, utility, evidence," etc.
23. "Remark degrees," *i.e.*, in error, ignorance, and guilt.
24. "Observe different interests." Thus when the Lord Jesus healed the withered hand in the synagogue on the Sabbath, the divine Healer, the afflicted man, and the Herodians and the Pharisees had different interests in the miracle. Each regarded it in the light of his own character and desires.
25. "Distinguish, Define, Divide."
26. "Compare the different parts of the text together."

LOGICAL METHOD is, according to Dr. Beck, a union of cognitions determined by the internal relations of things; in other words, by the necessary interdependence of being or substance, and attribute and accident, of cause and operation or effect, of condition and conditional, of ends and means. This is distinguished by him from the geographical and chronological method, which is based on external relations of objects in time and space. Definition, in pure logic, relates to the contents of a conception; division to its extent. To divide logically is to represent the objects which a conception comprehends, both in their relation to each other, and in their relation to the concept itself. The office



of logical division is to regard a conception as a genus, and to resolve it into its several species, or to subordinate the particular to the general, a case to its rule, and an inference to a universal proposition; consequently this kind of division involves the following elements: 1. A given conception, or the divisible whole; 2. a principle of division; that is, some general attribute of the divisible whole, which determines the character of the division. As we reflect upon a given conception from various points of view, we discover in it different principles of division. Thus we get collateral divisions. MAN, for example, may be variously divided. We may take as the principal of division, either his nationality or religion, or morality, or mental qualities, or occupations. In each division the given conception, man, is the same; but for each new principle we adopt, we get a different set of members of division, or specific differences, or various particulars. Each member of a division may itself be regarded as a divisible whole from which a subordinate division may be derived. Thus we get subdivisions which may be subjected to the same dividing process to almost any extent. That division to which a subdivision is immediately subordinate, is called a superior division. The division which comprehends all the different series of subdivisions is called the fundamental or primary division.

As to the order of division, Dr. Beck's precept is: In the first place elucidate the given conception by a complete definition; secondly, settle the principle of division, which must be an essential attribute of the given conception; next determine by this principle the several species of the divisible whole; then take each species in turn as a divisible whole; again settle a principle of division, and determine the several subordinate species, and thus advance till the process is complete. Hence, as Ziegler teaches, it is an offence against logical method when a preacher, *e.g.*, upon the proposition, "Why is it necessary to bridle the tongue?" builds this as a subdivision, "What is it to bridle the tongue?"

The laws of logical method are worth remembering, as they constitute the ground-works of rhetorical method. "It is the fundamental tendency of the mind," as Dr. Beck observes, "to refer its manifold conceptions each to its own category, and thus reduce them to unity in order to comprehend them. Hence it is the logical method only which can satisfy the deepest wants of the human understanding."—HERVEY.

**Specimen Subdivision.**—The advantage of subdivision will be apparent on examination of the following scheme for the study of the poems of Oliver Wendell Holmes, prepared for the Unity Club, Chicago. The student that had for a subject nothing more specific than the name of the poet would write a vague and valueless essay; but from the fifty limited topics suggested, he can select at least one or two that he can discuss with hope of saying something.

The page-references are to the "Household Edition," unless the letters I. G. are added to indicate the recent collection called "The Iron Gate and other Poems."

## I.

## HOLMES AT HOME.

*"What if a hundred years ago,  
Those close-shut lips had answered, No!"*

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*Conversation.*—For your picture of the man watch him at the Breakfast Table ("Autocrat"—"Professor"—"Poet") and in others' sketches, as well as in the poems above. In "Poetic Localities of Cambridge" he describes his old home. Your impression of the man—his face, manner, character—from his writings? Which part of his advice in the "Rhymed Lesson" hits your best friend?—Notice how often the *old-age* thought comes over Holmes. How came a boy to write "The Last Leaf"? Is fifty old? Compare with his "Snow-Line" other old-age poems,—Emerson's "Terminus," Whittier's "St. Martin's Summer," Longfellow's "Morituri Salutamus," and his "Personal Poems" in "In the Harbor."

## II.

## THE FRIEND.

*"When you were Bill and I was Joe."*

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BILL AND JOE, . . . . .	207	AD AMICUS, . . . . .	236
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ALL HERE, . . . . .	222	A GOOD TIME GOING, . . . . .	169
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*Conversation.*—Which is the best of the Class-Poems? Is it a sad or a merry series to read?—Identify his friends and classmates, if possible (the Triennial Catalogue of Harvard College may help); and such allusions, all through, as—

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three-decker brain, . . . . .	213	romancer, Magnolia, . . . . .	102
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Joe, Bill, F. W. C., etc.		gray chief, . . . . .	145

## III.

## THE DOCTOR.

*"He's killed the Squire—He'll kill the Deacon, too."*

*"Those grand specifics Nature gave  
Were never pulsed by weights and scales."*

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*Conversation.*—Compare his "Mechanism in Thought and Morals," and essays in "Currents and Counter-Currents;" and for heredity his "Elsie Venner" and "Guardian Angel."—Should you like him for a doctor? What sort of doctor's-talk and medicine would you expect from him?—Does the "Two Armies" refer to soldier and physician?—Are there any worthy poems by any one on the Human Body,—its marvel?—What other doctor-poets or doctors famous in literature are there?

## IV.

## THE PATRIOT.

*"Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!"*

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VESTIGIA QUINQUE, I. G., . . . . .	10	JAPANESE BANQUET, . . . . .	266

*Conversation.*—Is our early history rich or poor in romance?—Why no Abolition poems?—Do his war-poems stir you? Compare with Lowell, Whittier, and Longfellow on similar themes.—The two boy-poets of “Old Ironsides” (see p. 20) and “Thanatopsis.”

V.

THE POET.

*“As the seasons s'ld along,  
Every year a notch of song.”*

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TO MY READERS, . . . . .	xi.	POEM TO ORDER, . . . . .	288
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*Conversation.*—What poems of Nature do you find? Has he the poet's eye for Nature? What think you of his Spring and Autumn pictures (99, 165, 243)?—Compare Holmes's ideal of the Poet and his Mission with that of other poets. Is poetry an earnest business or a pastime to him?

VI.

THE WIT.

*“I never dare to write  
As funny as I can.”*

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*Conversation.*—Is it wit or humor? Does it ever sting? What geniality or self-control—which is it?—that shows in Holmes? But do you wish he *had* used his power to sting some things?

Compare his fun with Lowell's and Bret Harte's and Hood's —The imagination of the poet and that of the humorist compared. Does humor steal the sense of beauty away? Does it imply shallow sympathies? Has Holmes much of the humorist's pathos? In what poems do you find it?—Are "metrical essays" to be borne? Are "occasional" verses—"poems served to order"—often poems? Has Holmes's good-nature (see "Programme," 242) cost him dear, or not, as poet? Is he an artist as to words, phrases, and music of verse? Among our five elder poets, what word or two characterizes him and our debt to him? Is he a great poet? By what poems will he be known in 1972? Which shows him at his best, his prose or poetry? Is not his best poetry in his prose?

What three poems seem his noblest to you? What three his funniest? His three best compliments to friends? Ten familiar quotations? Better the mottoes chosen above for our half-dozen glimpses of the poet.

**The Subject Stated.**—A question definitely stated is half settled. So a subject clearly conceived and circumscribed is half treated. One should determine not only the point on which he will write, but the radius of treatment, and hence the circumference of exclusion. The circle may have any degree of extension, for in the world of ideas every object is connected with every other, and may suggest any other. If these suggestions are followed without system or limit, the discourse leads the mind, not the mind the discourse; and the writer, like the pilot of a helmless vessel, abandons himself to an uncertain voyage, not knowing where he shall land.

Therefore, in order to lead and sustain the progress of a discourse, one must clearly know whence one starts, and whither one goes, and never lose sight of either the point of departure or the destination. But, to effect this, the road must be measured beforehand, and the principal distance marks must have been placed. There is a risk else of losing one's way, and then, either one arrives at no end, even after much fatigue, productive of intermina-

ble discourses leading to nothing,—or if one at last reaches the destination, it is after an infinity of turns and circuits, which have wearied the hearer as well as the speaker, without profit or pleasure for anybody.—BAUTAIN.

Many speakers resemble the men of an exploring party in a newly settled country, who have no particular object in view; as long as they do but get over a certain amount of ground, they are careless as to the direction they may have taken, and are not much surprised if they find at last that they have been walking in a circle, and have arrived at the very spot from which they originally started: on the other hand, a good speaker may be compared to a native of the same country, who, striking unhesitatingly into the right path, never once pauses or turns aside until he attains the object of his journey.—HALCOMBE.

#### GATHERING MATERIAL.

It has been said that if the task of describing the hippopotamus were given to an Englishman, a Frenchman, and a German, the Englishman would take down his gun, sail for Africa, shoot one, examine it, and tell what he had seen; the Frenchman would ransack the National Library, read all that had ever been written of the animal, and compile a description; while the German would light his pipe, lean back in his chair, and evolve the hippopotamus out of his inner consciousness.

HELP THAT MUST BE LOOKED FOR.—To define and state the subject will require original reflection; it will indeed call into use nearly all the previous general preparation of the pupil that can be made available. After he has clearly determined the point to be discussed, the pupil is not advised to evolve out of his inner consciousness any ideas that he can get elsewhere. With all the suggestions that he can derive from books and conversation, he will still have quite enough to do to make his presentation of the subject worthy of attention. His aim is the truth of

the matter ; and he would be as foolish to neglect the landmarks laid down in the books of wise men, as he would to neglect the paths up a mountain or through a forest, trodden by men who had been there before, and who knew the way. If the paths do not lead him where he wants to go, he can strike out for himself ; but he will do well to try the paths first. The boy that is too conceited to follow a track is likely to be lost in the woods.

A speaker at a teachers' association spent half the time allotted to him in apologizing for the revolutionary character of the ideas he was about to be the first to announce. He knew the audience would be startled and shocked ; perhaps it would be indignant. He could only say that his views were reached after the consideration of many years. The essay he was about to read was the result of six months' direct preparation. He begged his hearers to be patient with him, and to remember that, however heretical, he was at least sincere. What the consequences of his discovery would be, he could not foresee. That they would be momentous he could not doubt, but he could not shrink from the responsibility. The truth must stand, though the skies tumbled.

After all this introduction, he proceeded to read a vague and timorous exposition of the theory that mind is a manifestation of physical force : a theory that it was an undoubted achievement for him to have reached unaided, but which had for years been familiar to all well-read men in the works of Comte and Bain.

Here was a pitiable waste of mental effort. When the idea first suggested itself to him, he should have reflected that the chance of its being a new hypothesis in the world of thought was infinitesimal ; so he should have searched to find where it had been propounded, whether it had been refuted, or what was the present state of the discussion. This investigation might have led him to give up the idea as unworthy of further consideration, or to apply his thinking intelligently. In either case it would have saved him from throwing away his time, and from making himself ridiculous.

Chemistry advances because its students make themselves familiar with what others have discovered and fixed, before they

choose their own narrow fields for further investigation. There may be among them one or two that could in the course of a lifetime discover oxygen for themselves. But why should they waste labor in doing over again what Priestley has done as well as it can be done? It is for each generation to begin where the last left off, and thus to advance in geometrical ratio.

So in composition, the subject having been chosen and limited, the first step is to discover what great minds have thought about it. There will be found enough variance of opinion and difference of treatment to leave exercise for judgment and taste; nor will it lessen the possibility of an original contribution to the subject, that the student knows and is inspired by the best thoughts of others.

*Possession in the Finder's Name.*—Those who have to treat a subject which has not been treated before, are obliged to draw from a consideration of the subject, and from their own resources, all they have to say. Then, according to their genius and their penetration, and in proportion to the manner in which they put themselves in presence of the things, will their discourse evince more or less truth, exactitude, and depth. They are sure to be original, since they are the first-comers—and, in general, the first view, which is not influenced by any prejudice or bias, but which arises from the natural impression of the object upon the soul, produces clear and profound ideas, which remain in the kingdom of science or of art as common property, and a sort of patrimony for those who come later. Afterward, when the way is opened, and many have trodden it, leaving their traces behind them, when a subject has been discussed at various times and among several circles, it is hard to be original, in the strict sense, upon that topic: that is, to have new thoughts—thoughts not expressed before. But it is both possible and incumbent to have that other species of originality, which consists in putting forth no ideas except such as one has made one's own by a conception of one's own, and thus quickened by the life of one's own mind. This is called *taking possession in the finder's name*: and Molière, when he imitated Plautus and Terence; La Fontaine, when he borrowed from Æsop and Phædrus, were not ashamed of the practice. This condition is indispensable if life is to be imparted to the discourse; and it is this which distinguishes the orator, who draws on his own interior resources even when he borrows, from the actor who impersonates, or the reader who recites the productions of another.

*FUSION OF THE IDEAS OF OTHERS.*—In such a case the problem stands therefore thus: When you have to speak on a subject already treated by several authors, you must carefully cull their justest and most striking thoughts, analyze and sift these with critical discernment and penetration, then fuse them in your own alembic by a powerful synthetic operation, which, rejecting whatever is heterogeneous, collects and kneads whatever is homogeneous or amalgamable, and fashions forth a complex idea that shall assume consistency, unity, and color in the understanding by the very heat of the mind's labor.

If we may compare things spiritual with things material,—and we always may,—inco they are governed by the same laws, and hence their analogy,—we would say that, in the formation of an idea by this method, something occurs similar to what is observed in the production of the ceramic or modeller's art, composed of various elements, earths, salts, metals, alkalies, acids, and the rest, which, when suitably separated, sifted, purified, are



first united into one compound, then kneaded, shaped, moulded, or turned, and finally subjected to the action of the fire, which combines them in unity, and gives to the whole solidity and splendor.—BAUTAIN.

**NECESSITY OF WIDE READING.**—“The orator who speaks after many others, and must treat the same topic, ought first to endeavor to make himself acquainted with all that has been written on the subject, in order to extract from the mass the thoughts which best serve his end; he ought then to collect and fuse within his own thought the lights emitted by other minds, gather and converge upon a single point the rays of those various luminaries.

“He cannot shirk this labor, if he would treat his subject with fulness and profundity; in a word, if he is in earnest with his business, which is to seek truth, and to make it known. Like every true artist, he has an intuition of the ideal, and to that ideal he is impelled by the divine instinct of his intelligence to lift his conceptions and his thoughts, in order to produce, first in himself, and then upon others, by speaking or by whatever is his vehicle of expression, something which shall forever tend toward it, without ever attaining it. *For ideas*, properly so called, being the very conceptions of the Supreme Mind, the eternal archetypes after which all created things have been modelled with all their powers, the human mind, made after the image of the Creator, yet always finite, whatever its force or its light, can catch but glimpses of them here below, and will always be incapable of conceiving and of reproducing them in their immensity and infinitude.”

### **Not too Much Reading.**

However, care must be taken here not to allow one's self to be carried away by too soaring a train of considerations, or into too vast a field; all is linked with all, and in things of a higher world this is more especially the case, for there you are in the realm of sovereign unity and universality. A philosopher, meditating and writing, may give wings to his contemplation, and his flight will never be too vigorous, provided his intelligence be illumined with the true light, and guided in the right path; but the speaker generally stands before an audience who are not on his own level, and whom he must take at theirs. Again, he speaks in a given state of things, with a view to some immediate effect, some definite end. His topic is restricted by these conditions, and his man-

ner of treating it must be subordinated to them, his discourse adapted to them. It is no business of his to say all that might be said, but merely what is necessary or useful in the actual case, in order to enlighten his hearers and to persuade them. He must, therefore, circumscribe his matter within the limits of his purpose; and his discourse must have just that extent, that elevation, and discretion which the special circumstances demand. (See page 318.)

*Read, Compare, Assimilate.*—It is with this aim that the orator ought to prepare his materials, and lay in, as it were, the provisions for his discourse.

First, as we have said, he must collect the ingredients of his compost. Then he will do what the bee does, which rifles the flowers—exactly what the bee does; for, by an admirable instinct which never misleads it, it extracts from the cup of the flowers only what serves to form the wax and the honey, the aromatic and the oleaginous particles. But, be it well observed, the bee first nourishes itself with these extracts, digests them, transmutes them, and turns them into wax and honey solely by an operation of absorption and assimilation.

Just so should the speaker do. Before him lie the fields of science and of literature, rich in each description of flower and fruit—every hue, every flavor. In these fields he will seek his booty, but with discernment; and choosing only what suits his work, he will extract from it, by *thoughtful* reading, and by the process of mental tasting (his thoughts all absorbed in his topic, and darting at once upon whatever relates to it), everything which can minister nutriment to his intelligence, or fill it, or even perfume it; in a word, the substantial or aromatic elements of his honey, or idea, but ever so as to take in and to digest, like the bee, in order that there may be real transformation and appropriation, and consequently a production fraught with life, and to live.—  
BAUTAIN.

**Where to Look.**—To know what books to consult upon a given subject is in itself a liberal education. No school or college can do much more for a man than to show him how much there is to be learned, and how to learn

whatever little part of that much it may be worth his immediate while to master. As the stranger in town does not attempt to become acquainted with every street, but by consulting a map fixes in mind the main thoroughfares, so as to keep in mind in what part of the city he is, and how he may get to any other part, so one gets from the best education a bird's-eye view of the whole field of knowledge; he does not know everything, but he knows what steps to take to become acquainted with anything.

ε **SOME GENERAL HINTS.**—In general it may be said that one would naturally consult first a cyclopædia, two or three cyclopædias, if so many are at hand. Here will be found not only direct information, but references to the leading books on the subject. These books, if accessible, will refer to others, and these in turn to others yet, so that with plenty of time and a large enough library one may hope to hit upon most that is valuable in the literature of the subject.

“What, *read* books!” said one of the great lights of European physiological science to a not less eminent American scholar, “I never *read* a book in my life, except the Bible.” He had time only to glance over the thousands of volumes which lay around him, to consult them occasionally, to accept the particular facts or illustrations which he needed to aid him in his own researches.—**MARSH.**

The best way of reading books with rapidity, is to acquire that habit of severe attention to what they contain that perpetually confines the mind to the single object it has in view. When you have read enough to have acquired the habit of reading without suffering your mind to wander, and when you can bring to bear upon your subject a great share of previous knowledge, you may then read with rapidity; before that, as you have taken the wrong road, the faster you proceed the more you will be sure to err.—**SYDNEY SMITH.**

*Periodicals*, especially the monthlies and quarterlies, are becoming more and more essential to thorough investigation, and more and more accessible, through careful indexes. *Littell's Living Age* will give one glimpses of the latest thought, and will suggest much not easily found in books.

Finally, *Conversation* is a most important resource. Before one has begun to investigate, while one is investigating, and after one has reached and begun to formulate ideas, one will greatly profit by talking the subject over with an intelligent companion. Older persons are often glad to be approached by the young enthusiast, and will not unfrequently suggest more in a minute than might be happened upon in a month.

Thackeray illustrates this when he makes Addison say in a conversation with Henry Esmond :

"One of the greatest of a great man's qualities is success: 'tis the result of all the others; 'tis a latent power in him which compels the favor of the gods, and subjugates fortune. Of all his gifts I admire that one in the great Marlborough. To be brave? every man is brave, but in being victorious, as he is, I fancy there is something divine. In presence of the occasion, the great soul of the leader shines out, and the god is confessed. Death itself respects him, and passes by him to lay others low. War and carnage flee before him to ravage other parts of the field, as Hector from before the divine Achilles. We say he hath no pity; no more have the gods, who are above it, and superhuman. The fainting battle gathers strength at his aspect, and wherever he rides victory charges with him."

"A couple of days after, when Mr. Esmond revisited his poetic friend he found this thought, *struck out in the fervor of conversation*, improved and shaped into those famous lines which are in truth the noblest in the poem of the 'Campaign.'"

'Twas then great Marlbró's mighty soul was proved,  
That, in the shock of charging hosts unmov'd  
Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,  
Examín'd all the dreadful scenes of war;  
In peaceful thought the field of death survey'd,  
To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,  
Inspir'd repul'd battalions to engage,  
And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.

So when an angel by divine command  
 With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,  
 Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past,  
 Calm and serene he drives the furious blast ;  
 And, pleas'd th' Almighty's orders to perform,  
 Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

**Ideas Everywhere.**—If the writer takes the proper hold of his subject, his subject will soon take hold of him, and illustrate itself at every turn. He will be astonished to notice how every incident of his daily life, the morning newspaper, the book he picks up while waiting for lunch, the conversation he overhears on the horse-car, all have a bearing on the topic that absorbs him. This is from the principle already named, that all ideas are connected. When one has a firm grasp of any one of the multitude he feels the pull upon it of all the rest.

### **Taking Notes.**

Always read pen or pencil in hand. Mark the parts which most strike you, those in which you perceive the germ of an idea or of anything new to you ; then, when you have finished your reading, make a note,—let it be a substantial note, not a mere transcription or extract—a note embodying the very thought which you have apprehended, and which you have already made your own by digestion and assimilation.

Above all, let these notes be short and lucid ; put them down one under the other, so that you may afterward be able to run over them at a single view.

Mistrust long readings from which you carry nothing away. Our mind is naturally so lazy, the labor of thought is so irksome to it, that it gladly yields to the pleasure of reading other people's thoughts, in order to avoid the trouble of forming any itself ; and then time passes in endless readings, the pretext of which is some hunt after materials, and which come to nothing. The mind ruins its own sap, and gets burdened with trash : it is as though overlaid with undigested food, which gives it neither force nor light. (See page 322.)

Quit not a book until you have wrested from it whatever relates

the most closely to your subject. Not till then go on to another, and get the cream off, if I may so express myself, in the same manner. Repeat this labor with several, until you find that the same things are beginning to return, or nearly so, and that there is nothing to gain in the plunder; or suppose that you feel your understanding to be sufficiently furnished, and that your mind now requires to digest the nutriment it has taken.—BAUTAIN.

**Development of the Subject.**—Important as it was clearly to define the subject before the investigation began, under this treatment it is almost sure to take on an altered aspect, if not a wholly different meaning.

It is customary to tell good little boys and girls that genius is only capacity for work; and that such men as Bacon and Shakespeare and Bonaparte achieved great results only because they formed habits of intense and continued concentration of energy. The moral is, that good little boys and girls must study hard, but, like many other excellent morals, it is enforced at the expense of truth. In the men that have accomplished most, and whom we therefore naturally cite for illustration, genius has usually been accompanied by habits of industry. Such men, with a sort of modest self-glorification, have sometimes attributed their achievements to their labor, instead of to the insight that prompted and directed that labor. But there are men in this country that have devoted more intense and continued labor to the discovery of perpetual motion than Bacon gave to the "Novum Organon." A half-hour's study in boyhood of an elementary text-book of physics would have proved to them beyond the shadow of a doubt that perpetual motion is simply impossible. That half-hour's study they never had, and so they have wasted their lives in butting their heads against one of nature's stone-walls.

Now it is the peculiarity of genius that without this half-hour's study it escapes the impracticable and the irrelevant. It peers beneath the accidents to the essence, and takes the shortest path to the truth sought.

Here is an experience common to all of us who have tried to investigate a subject.

We first think it over, gathering and classifying all that we

know about it. Then we begin to read, probably in the direction of supplementing such of our ideas as seem most essential. Under this treatment the subject broadens. We are surprised to find how its roots extend through every field of knowledge. One authority compels us to consult another, until we long to live in the British Museum, and to lay under tribute all books, of all times, in all languages.

Presently we reach a point where our new information is of details, and we feel sure that our general analysis is sound and fundamental. Then we begin to write. And in the very flush of our wisdom, while we are seeking perchance for an illustration or a happy expression, we encounter a hint, a suggestion, a chance remark, which flashes over us the discovery that we are not yet even approaching the kernel of truth we supposed ourselves to have grasped; that we are groping aimlessly about the circumference, and have not found even the path to the centre.

Now the man of genius escapes this waste of effort. It is not the quantity of work he does: it is the quality. His every stroke tells, because the eye that directs it is unerring.

Hence too much time should not be given to the title and introduction of an essay. The preface of a book is always the last part written, and the wording of the title is often a happy inspiration that comes in the midst of the labor of composition.

Not seldom the young writer finds himself in his final revision obliged to omit as extraneous the passages which he has polished the most carefully. His loss is still greater if he does not omit them.

**Arrangement of Notes.**—As notes accumulate, divisions of the subject will suggest themselves, and classification will naturally follow. This is the more necessary, that differing views on the same point may be closely compared, which might easily be neglected in a mass of undigested material. But as the principle of classification is almost sure to vary as the investigation proceeds, all the

notes should be read over from time to time, and redistributed wherever necessary.

It has been Emerson's habit to spend the forenoon in his study, with constant regularity. He has not waited for mood-, but caught them as they came, and used their results in each day's work. He has been a diligent though a slow and pain-taking worker. It has been his wont to jot down his thoughts at all hours and places. The suggestions which result from his readings, conversations, and meditations are transferred to the note-book he carries with him. In his walks many a gem of thought is thus preserved; and his mind is always alert, quick to see, his powers of observation being perpetually awake. The results of his thinking are thus stored up, to be made use of when required. The story is told that his wife suddenly awakened in the night, before she knew his habits, and heard him moving about the room. She anxiously inquired if he were ill. "Only an idea," was his reply, and proceeded to jot it down. Curtis humorously says the villagers "relate that he has a huge manuscript book, in which he incessantly records the ends of thoughts, bits of observation and experience, the facts of all kinds—a kind of intellectual and scientific scrap-bag, into which all shreds and remnants of conversation and reminiscences of wayside reveries are incontinently thrust."

After his note-books are filled, he transcribes their contents to a larger commonplace book. He then writes at the bottom, or in the margin, the subject of each paragraph. When he desires to write an essay, he turns to his note-books, transcribes all his paragraphs on that subject, drawing a perpendicular line through whatever he has thus copied. These separate jottings, perhaps written years apart, and in widely different circumstances and moods, are brought together, arranged in such order as is possible, and are welded together by such matter as is suggested at the time. Alcott relates going once to his study to find him with many sheets of manuscript scattered about on the floor, which he was anxiously endeavoring to arrange in something like a systematic treatment of the subject in hand at the time. The essay thus prepared is read before an audience to test its quality and construction. Its parts are frequently rearranged. Perhaps in its construction portions of previously used lectures are made to do new service. Should the lecture come at last to be put into one of his books, it is pruned of all but the telling sentences. His lectures which are rapidly composed, for special occasions, have a continuity and flow of thought quite different from the essays in his books. The address on Lincoln, written in one evening, shows this. The published essays are often the results of many lectures, the most pregnant sentences and paragraphs alone being retained. His apples are sorted over and over again, until only the very rarest, the most perfect are left. It does not matter that those thrown away are very good, and help to make clear the possibilities of the orchard: they are unmercifully cast aside. His essays are, consequently, very slowly elaborated, wrought out through days and months, and even years, of patient thought.

His essays are all carefully revised again and again, corrected, wrought over, portions dropped, and new matter added. He is unsparing in his corrections, striking out sentence after sentence; and paragraphs disappear from time to time. His manuscript is everywhere crowded with erasures and corrections; scarcely a page appears that is not covered with these evidences of his diligent revision.—G. W. COOKE.



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## CHAPTER XVII.

### INVENTION.

Invention, in the rhetorical sense, is that energy of the mind by which we discern ideas and their relations. Vinet likens it to a divining-rod, which enables some minds to discover riches of thought and beauties of language to which other minds are insensible. John Quincy Adams says: "It selects from the whole mass of ideas conceived or stored in the mind those which can most effectually promote the object of discourse; it gathers from the whole domain of real or apparent truth their inexhaustible subsidies to secure the triumph of persuasion." Thus it is seen to be not only an originating, but a constructive faculty. It not only seeks out that which was before unknown; it also seizes upon old truths and blends them together in new combinations. It finds new pathways through old regions of thought. It never contents itself with what others have done, but insists upon fashioning what is new to itself, whatever uses other minds have made of the same material.—KIDDER.

**The Essay Half Done.**—The work thus far laid out has demanded nothing of what is commonly looked upon as authorship. It has required judgment, but not more than is needed in a topical geography lesson. Without considering native talent, its accomplishment depends upon the will-power of any student.

Yet it is in amount and in kind the hardest part of essay-writing. Inertia has been overcome, the student is roused and interested, his mind is full of his subject, he really wants to know what the truth of the matter is, and how to reach it; if he has had practice enough to overcome his timidity, he is even anxious to begin the active part of composition.

**The Moment of Action.**—"It is with the mind as with the body, after nourishment and repose it requires to act and to transmit. When it has repaired its

strength it must exert it; when it has received, it must give; after having concentrated itself, it needs dilation; it must yield back what it has absorbed; fulness unrelieved is as painful as inanition. These are the two vital movements—attraction and expansion.”

*How to Begin.*—The moment this fulness is felt, the moment of acting or thinking for yourself has arrived.

You take up your notes and you carefully re-read them face to face with the topic to be treated. You blot out such as diverge from it too much, or are not sufficiently substantial, and by this elimination you gradually concentrate and compress the thoughts which have the greatest reciprocal bearing. You work these a longer or a shorter time in your understanding, as in a crucible, by the inner fire of reflection, and, in nine cases out of ten, they end by amalgamating and fusing into one another, until they form a homogeneous mass, which is reduced, like the metallic particles in incandescence, by the persistent hammering of thought, into a dense and solid oneness.

As soon as you become conscious of this unity, you obtain a glimpse of the essential idea of the composition, and in that essential idea, the leading ideas which will distribute your topic, and which already appear like the first organic lineaments of the discourse.

### **Repress Impatience.**

Sometimes the idea thus conceived, is developed and formed rapidly, and then the plan of the discourse arranges itself on a sudden, and you throw it upon paper warm with the fervor of the conception which has just taken place, as the metal in a state of fusion is poured into the mould, and fills at a single turn all its lineaments. It is the case most favorable to eloquence,—that is, if the idea has been well conceived, and if it be fraught with light.

But in general, one must not be in a hurry to form one's plan. In nature, life always needs a definite time for self-organization,—and it is only ephemeral beings which are quickly formed, for they quickly pass away. Everything destined to be durable is of slow growth, and both the solidity and the strength of existing things

bear a direct ratio to the length of their increase and the maturity of their production.

### **Development of the Idea.**

The thoughts apply themselves to a frequent consideration of the idea conceived ; they turn it and return it in every direction, look at it in all its aspects, place it in all manner of relations ; then they penetrate it with their light, scrutinize its foundation, and examine its principal parts in succession ; these begin to come out, separate themselves from each other, to assume sharp outlines, just as in the bud the first rudimentary traces of the flower are discernible ; then the other organic lines, appearing one after the other, instinct with life, or like the confused, first animate form, which, little by little, declares itself in all the finish of its proportions. In like manner, the idea, in the successive stages of its formation, shows itself each day in fuller development to the mind which bears it, and which acquires assurance of its progress by persevering meditation.

### **Reflection upon the Idea.**

There are frequently good ideas which perish in a man's understanding, abortively, whether for want of nourishment, or from the debility of the mind which, through levity, indolence, or giddiness, fails to devote a sufficient amount of reflection to what it has conceived. It is even observable that those who conceive with the greatest quickness and facility, bring forth, generally, both in thoughts and in language, the weakest and the least durable productions ; whether it be that they do not take time enough to mature what they have conceived,—hurried into precocious display by the vivacity of their feelings and imagination,—or on account of the impressionability and activity of their minds, which, ever yielding to fresh emotions, exhausting themselves in too rapid an alternation of revulsions, have not the strength for patient meditations, and allow the half-formed idea or the crude thought, born without life, to escape from the understanding. Much, then, is in our own power toward the ripening and perfecting of our ideas.

### **Organization of the Idea.**

The preparation of the plan of a discourse implies, before anything else, a knowledge of the things about which you have to

speak ; but a general knowledge is not enough ; you may have a great quantity of materials, of documents, and of information in your memory, and not be aware how to bring them to bear. It sometimes even happens that those who know most, or have most matter in their heads, are incapable of rightly conveying it. The over-abundance of acquisition and words crushes the mind, and stifles it, just as the head is paralyzed by a too great determination of blood, or a lamp is extinguished by an excess of oil.

You must begin, therefore, by methodizing what you know about the subject you wish to treat, and thus, in each discourse, you must adopt as your centre or chief idea, the point to be explained, but subordinate to this idea all the rest, in such a way as to constitute a sort of organism, having its head, its organs, its main limbs, and all the means of connection and of circulation by which the light of the paramount idea, emanating from the focus, may be communicated to the furthest parts, even to the last thought, and last word ; as in the human body the blood emerges from the heart, and is spread throughout all the tissues, animating and coloring the surface of the skin.

Thus only will there be life in the discourse, because a true unity will reign in it,—that is, a natural unity resulting from an interior development, an unfolding from within, and not from an artificial gathering of heterogeneous members and their arbitrary juxtaposition.—BAUTAIN.

### Practical Rules.

I. Address your mind to the invention of thoughts, not words. Words may be employed, but only as auxiliaries.

II. Note down, or otherwise make sure of whatever relevant thoughts your mind can call to its aid, irrespective of order or mainly so.

III. At first be not too scrupulous on the subject of relevancy. Entertain whatever seemingly good thoughts come to *your aid* at your call. Try them, push them out to conclusions. Perhaps if not available themselves they will lead to others that are.

IV. Pursue invention in every variety of circumstance, in the study and out of it. Make it the subject of special and protracted occupation, and also of occasional attention, when walking or rid-

ing, when taking exercise or rest. One's very dreams at night may sometimes be made serviceable for this object.

V. Make use of former studies and preparations as helps to invention rather than as substitutes for it.

Invention as thus practised will always strengthen but never exhaust itself. It will become a most delightful exercise, causing the mind to glow with rapture at its new creations and combinations. While one thus muses (inventively meditates), the fire of inspiration burns within him, and he becomes prepared to speak with his tongue. —KIDDER.

**The Plan of a Discourse** "*is the order of the things which have to be unfolded.* You must therefore begin by gathering these together, whether facts or ideas, and examining each separately, in their relation to the subject or purport of the discourse, and in their mutual bearings with respect to it. Next, after having selected those which befit the subject, and rejecting those which do not, you must marshal them around the main idea, in such a way as to arrange them according to their rank and importance, with respect to the result which you have in view." But, what is worth still more than even this composition or synthesis, you should try, when possible, to draw forth, by analysis or deduction, the complete development of one single idea, which becomes not merely the centre, but the very principle of the rest. This is the best manner of explaining or developing, because existences are thus produced in nature, and a discourse, to have its full value and full efficiency, should imitate her in her vital process, and perfect it by idealizing that process."

In fact, reason, when thinking and expressing its thought, performs a natural function, like the plant which germinates, flowers, and bears fruit. It operates, indeed, according to a more exalted power, but it follows in the operation the same laws as all beings endued with life; and the methods of analysis and synthesis, of

deduction and induction, essential to it, have their mutual types and symbols in the vital acts of organic beings, which all proceed likewise by the way of expansion and contraction, unfolding and enfolding, diffusion and collection.

The most perfect plan is, therefore, the plan which organizes a discourse in the manner nature constitutes any being fraught with life. It is the sole means of giving to speaking a real and natural unity, and, consequently, real strength and beauty, which consist in the unity of life.

*Analogy to the Human Body.*—In every discourse, if it have life, there is a parent idea or fertile germ, and all the parts of the discourse are like the principal organs and members of an animated body. The propositions, expressions, and words resemble those secondary organs which connect the principal, as the nerves, muscles, vessels, tissues, attaching them to one another and rendering them co-partners in life and death. Then amid this animate and organic mass there is the spirit of life, which is in the blood, and is everywhere diffused with the blood from the heart, life's centre, to the epidermis. So in eloquence there is the spirit of the words, the soul of the orator, inspired by the subject, his intelligence illumined with mental light, which circulates through the whole body of the discourse, and pours therein brightness, heat, and life. A discourse without a parent idea, is a stream without a fountain, a plant without a root, a body without a soul; empty phrases, sounds which beat the air, or a tinkling cymbal.

*Not New, but Newly.*—Nevertheless, let us not be misapprehended; if we say that a discourse requires a parent idea, we do not mean that this idea must be a *new one*, never before conceived or developed by any one. Were this so, no more orators would be possible, since already, from Solomon's day, there has been nothing new under the sun, and the cycle of ages continually brings back the same things under different forms.

It is not likely, then, that in our day there should be more new ideas than in that of the King of Israel; but ideas, like all the existences of this world, are renewed in each age, and for each generation. They are reproduced under varied forms and with modifications of circumstances: "Non nova sed novè," said Vincent of Lerins. The same things are differently manifested; and

thus they adapt themselves to the wants of men, which change with time and place.

For this reason the orator may, and should, say ancient things, in substance ; but he will say them in another manner, corresponding with the dispositions of the men of his epoch, and he will add the originality of his individual conception and expression.—BAUTAIN.

**Too Much Delay** “in the composition of the plan, when the idea is ready and demands expression, is prejudicial to the work, which may wither, perish, and be even stifled in the understanding for want of that air and light which have become indispensable to its life, and which it can derive only from being set in the open day.”

There are men who experience the greatest difficulty imaginable in bringing forth their thoughts, either from a deficiency of the needful vigor to put them forward and invest them with a suitable form, or from a natural indolence which is incapable of continued efforts, like those plants which will never pierce the soil by their own unaided energy, and for which the spade must be used at the risk of destroying their tender shoots. This sluggishness, or rather incapability of producing when the time is come, is a sign of mental feebleness, of a species of impotency. It invariably betokens some signal defect in the intellectual constitution, and those who are afflicted with it will write little, will write that little with difficulty, and will never be able to speak extemporaneously in public,—they will never be orators.

Nevertheless, even in him who is capable of becoming one, there is sometimes a certain inertness and laziness. We have naturally a horror of labor, and of all kinds the labor of thought is the hardest and the most troublesome ; so that frequently, for no other reason than to avoid the pain which must be undergone, a person long keeps in his own head an idea, already perfectly ripe, and requiring only to be put forth. He cannot bring himself to take up the pen and put his plan into shape ; he procrastinates, day after day, under the futile pretext of not having read enough, not having reflected enough, and that the moment is not yet come, and that the work will gain by more prolonged studies. Then, by



this unseasonable delay, the fruit languishes in the understanding from want of nourishment ; falls by degrees into atrophy, loses its vital force, and dies before it is yet born. Many an excellent idea thus perishes in the germ, or is stifled in its development by the laziness or the debility of the minds which have conceived them, and which have been impotent to give them forth.

The Almighty's gift is lost through man's fault. This happens to men otherwise distinguished and gifted with rare qualities, but who dread the responsibilities of duty and the pressure of the circumstances in which they may become involved. Under pretext of preserving their freedom, but really in order to indulge their indolence, they shun the necessity of labor, with its demands and its fatigues, and thus deprive themselves of the most active stimulus of intellectual life. Given up to themselves, and fearing every external influence as a bondage, they pass their lives in conceiving without ever producing—la reading without contributing anything of their own—in reflecting, or rather in ruminating, without ever either writing or speaking publicly. It would have been happy for such men to have been obliged to work for a living: for, in the spur of want, their mind would have found a spring which it has missed, and the necessity of subsisting by labor, or positive hunger, would have effected in them what the love of truth or of glory was not able to accomplish.—BAUTAINE.

**First, a Bold Outline.**—"Beware of introducing style into the arrangement of your plan; it ought to be like an artist's draught, the sketch, which, by a few lines unintelligible to everybody save him who has traced them, decides what is to enter into the composition of the picture, and each object's place. Light and shadow, coloring and expression, will come later."

Or, to take another image, the plan is a skeleton, the dry bone-frame of the body, repulsive to all except the adept in anatomy, but full of interest, of meaning, and of significance for him who has studied it and who has practised dissection; for there is not a cartilage, a protuberance, or a hollow which does not mark what that structure ought to sustain—and therefore you have here the whole body in epitome, the entire organization in miniature.

Hence, the moment you feel that your idea is mature, and that you are master of it in its centre and in its radiations, its main or trunk lines, take the pen and throw upon paper what you see, what you conceive in your mind. If you are young or a novice, allow the pen to have its way and the current of thought to flow on. There is always life in this first rush, and care should be taken

not to check its impetus or cool its ardor. Let the volcanic lava run ; it will become fixed and crystalline of itself.

Make your plan at the first heat, if you be impelled to do so, and follow your inspiration to the end ; after which let things alone for a few days, or at least for several hours. Then re-read attentively what you have written, and give a new form to your plan ; that is, re-write it from one end to the other, leaving only what is necessary, what is essential. Eliminate inexorably whatever is accessory or superfluous, and trace, engrave with care the leading characteristics which determine the configuration of the discourse, and contain within their demarcations the parts which are to compass it. Only take pains to have the principal features well marked, vividly brought out, and strongly connected together, in order that the division of the discourse may be clear and the links firmly welded.

The inexperienced orator is to confine himself in constructing his plan to the salient features of his subject, to lay down boldly the trunk lines of the discourse, omitting all filling up ; to draw broadly, with hatchet-strokes, so to say, and not to set about punctuating, not to get lost in minutie, when the business is to mark out the main ways.

Another advice which may be given is, to leave nothing obscure, doubtful, or vague in these outlines, and to admit no feature into his sketch which does not indicate something of importance. By practice and the directions of a skilful master, he will learn to deal in those potent pencillings which express so much in so small a space ; and this it is which makes extemporization so easy and so copious, because each point of the plan becomes instinct with life, and by pressing upon it as you pass along your discourse makes it a spring gushing with luminous ideas and inexhaustible expressions.—BAUTAIN.

**Good Sense, Sagacity, Tact.**—“The right distribution of your plan depends also on your manner of conceiving your subject and the end you have in view in your discourse ; nor have general rules much practical range even here. What is required are, good sense, sagacity, and tact ; good sense to see things as they are, in their true light, or in their most favorable aspect, so as not to say what will not befit the occasion ; sagacity, to turn the subject over, penetrate it through, analyze it, anatomize it, and exhibit it, first on paper, then in speaking ; tact, to speak appropriately, leave in the shade whatever cannot appear without disadvantage, and bring out into strong

light whatever is most in your favor; to put everything in its own place, and to do all this quickly, with neatness, clearness, simplicity, so that in the very knot of the statement of the case may be discerned all the folds and coils of the main idea about to be united and laid forth by the discourse."

An ill-conceived, an ill-divided plan, which does not at once land the hearer right in the middle of the subject and in full possession of the matter, is rather an encumbrance than a help. It is a rickety scaffolding which will bear nothing. It but loads and disfigures the building instead of serving to raise it.

**Proportion and Harmony** "in its parts contribute to the beauty of a discourse. In all things beauty is the result of variety in unity and of unity in variety. It is the necessity of oneness which assigns to each part its rank, place, and dimensions."

Frequently the exordium is too long, and the peroration interminable. There is little or nothing left for the middle; and you get a monster with an enormous head, a measureless tail, and a diminutive body. At other times it is some limb of the discourse which is lengthened until the body of the work is out of sight, the result being a shocking deformity, as when a man has long arms or legs with a dwarf's body. The main idea ought to come out in each part; the hearer ought to be always led back to it by the development of the accessory thoughts, however numerous, these having no regular vitality save by the sustained circulation through them of the former. Should they grow and dilate too much, it can only be at the cost of the parent idea; and they must produce deformity and a sort of disease in the discourse, like those monsters when there is any irregular or excessive growth of one organ, through the abnormal congestion of the blood, thus withdrawn from the rest of the organization.—BAUTAIN.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### STYLE.

In all literature which is genuine, the substance or matter is not one thing and the style another; they are inseparable. The style is not something superadded from without, as we may make a wooden house and then paint it; but it is breathed from within, and is instinct with the personality of the writer. Genuine literature expresses not abstract conceptions, pure and colorless, but thoughts and things, as these are seen by some individual mind, colored with all the views, associations, memories, and emotions which belong to that mind.—SHARPE.

**Matter vs. Manner.**—Thus far the student's attention has been concentrated upon the *what* of his thoughts, with very few hints as to how he should express them.

There are those that think this sufficient.

"Style is nothing but the order and movement in which our thoughts run," says one writer.

"You have too much style," grumbled an old critic. "Style is only a frame to hold the thoughts, as a window-sash holds the panes of glass. Too much sash obscures the light."

"If you think how you are to write, you will never write anything worth hearing. I write because I cannot help it," said Mozart.

"When we meet with the natural style we are highly delighted, because we expected to see an author, and we find a man," said Pascal.

"Style, indeed!" said Goethe. "The style of a writer is almost always the faithful representative of his mind. Therefore if any one wishes to write a clear style, let him begin by making his thoughts clear; and if any would write a noble style, let him first possess a noble soul."

The aphorism popularly but perhaps erroneously attributed to

Buffon, that "The style is the man," is a limited application of the general theory that there is such a relation between the mind of man and the speech he uses, that a perfect knowledge of either would enable an acute psychological philologist to deduce and construct the other from it.—MARSH.

The secret of good style in writing is, that words be used purely in their representative character, and not at all for their own sake. . . . This it is that so highly distinguishes Webster's style—the best yet written on this continent. His language is so transparent, that in reading him one seldom thinks of it, and can hardly see it. In fact, the proper character of his style is perfect, consummate manliness; in which quality I make bold to affirm that he has no superior in the whole range of English authorship.—HUDSON.

Learn, so far as possible, to be intelligible and transparent—no notice taken of your style, but solely of what you express by it: this is your clear rule, and if you have anything which is not quite trivial to express to your contemporaries, you will find such a rule a great deal more difficult to follow than many people think.—CARLYLE.

Excellent precept; but, alas for performance! none ever broke the rule more habitually than Carlyle himself. The idiom which he ultimately forged for himself was a new and strange form of English—rugged, disjointed, often uncouth; in his own phrase, "vast, fitful, decidedly fuliginous," but yet bringing out with marvellous vividness the thoughts that possessed him, the few truths which he saw clearly and was sure of—while it suggested not less powerfully the dark background of ignorance against which these truths shone out.—SHAIRP.

Modern English literature has nowhere any language to compare with the style of these [Newman's Parochial] Sermons, so simple and transparent, yet so subtle withal; so strong and yet so tender; the grasp of a strong man's hand, combined with the trembling tenderness of a woman's heart, expressing in a few monosyllables truth which would have cost other men a page of philo-ophic verbiage, laying the most gentle yet penetrating finger on the very core of things, reading to men their own most secret thoughts better than they knew them themselves.

Carlyle's style is like the full untutored swing of the giant's arm: Cardinal Newman's is the assured self-possession, the quiet gracefulness of the finished athlete. The one, when he means to be effective, seizes the most vehement feelings and the strongest words within his reach, and hurls them impetuously at the object. The other, with disciplined moderation and delicate self-restraint, shrinks instinctively from overstatement, but penetrates more directly to the core by words of sober truth and "vivid exactness."—SHAIRP.

At first sight, Shakspeare and his contemporary dramatists seem to write in styles much alike; nothing so easy as to fall into that of Massinger and the others; while no one has ever yet produced one scene conceived and expressed in the Shakspearian idiom. I suppose it is because Shakspeare is universal, and in fact has no manner; just as you can so much more readily copy a picture than nature herself.—COLERIDGE.

Style is of course nothing else but the art of conveying the meaning appropriately and with perspicuity, whatever that meaning may be, and one criterion of style is that it shall not be translatable without injury to the meaning. . . . In order to form a good style the primary rule and condition is, not to attempt to express ourselves in language before we thoroughly know our own meaning: when a man perfectly understands himself, appropriate diction will generally be at his command, either in writing or speaking. In such cases the thoughts and the words are associated. In the next place, precision in the use of terms is required, and the test is whether you can translate the phrase adequately into simple terms, regard being had to the feeling of the whole passage. Try this upon Shakspeare or Milton, and see if you can substitute other simple words in any given passage without a violation of the meaning or tone. The source of bad writing is the desire to be something more than a man of sense—the straining to be thought a genius; and it is just the same in speech making. If men would only say what they have to say in plain terms, how much more eloquent they would be!—COLERIDGE.

**On the other hand**, there is a view of style that makes it something more than habitual, natural expression. Thus Matthew Arnold says:

“Style, in my sense of the word, is a peculiar recasting and heightening, under a certain spiritual excitement, a certain pressure of emotion, of what a man has to say, in such a manner as to add dignity and distinction to it. . . . Power of style, properly so called, as manifested in masters of style, like Dante and Milton in poetry, Cicero, Bossuet, and Bolingbroke in prose, has for its characteristic effect this, to add dignity and distinction to it.”

**The best definitions** of style make it consist in the unconscious but unavoidable and indispensable smack of individuality in the writer.

The best style is not that which puts the reader most easily and in the shortest time in possession of a writer's naked thoughts, but that which is the truest image of a great intellect—which conveys fully, and carries farthest into other souls, the conceptions and feelings of a profound and lofty spirit.—CHANNING.

Science has to do with things, literature with thoughts; science

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Style is  
not  
anything  
at all

is universal, literature is personal; science uses words merely as symbols, and by employing symbols can often dispense with words; but literature uses language in its full compass, as including phraseology, idiom, style, composition, rhythm, eloquence, and whatever other qualities are included in it.—NEWMAN.

Literature being a fine art, as I understand it, a literary man can no more help having a style than a painter his; it may be more or less strongly marked, finished or faulty, but it cannot be wholly bad, or even indifferent. There is an ideal of literary expression which looks upon language as best employed when it becomes the perfectly transparent medium of thought—like plate-glass, as advocates of this theory phrase it. It is of course always in good taste to be simple, and a plainness approaching to boldness is infinitely better than the "fine" language, so called, indulged in by pseudo-cultivated writers. But I have never been able to accept the plate-glass theory, and cannot help fancying that it is the unconscious refuge of writers and readers without any keen apprehension of the charms of literary style. Ease and unaffectedness are indeed prime requisites of a good style, but why should we forego the pleasure to be had from other and more positive qualities than these? The imperishable charm belonging to certain writers lies in their style; it is their unique expression of their thought, more than the thought itself, we care for, as witness many of Lamb's most delightful sketches; and in the most original writers this characteristic quality of expression is so much a part of their genius that it is scarcely possible to separate between substance and form, the ideas and their embodiment. In fact, one is sometimes tempted to call the thought the grosser particle in this combination, or interpenetration, so subtle and exquisite may be the charm of mere words, not only in poetry, but in imaginative prose.—*Atlantic Monthly*.

Take an example, almost at random, from De Quincey. Speaking of the state of English hymnology at a certain period, he calls it "the howling wilderness of psalmody." "Ah," says a pedantic critic, "that is rhetoric." Very well; strip it of its "rhetoric," and yet express the same idea in its plenitude, if you can. It is impossible. You cannot drop that figure, and yet express the same kind and the same volume of thought. If any one thinks he can, we are very safe in responding, "Try it." A piece of Russia iron is not the same thing when melted and compacted and moulded into a slug.

Analyze a fragment from Ruskin, whose style is often thought personified. He wishes to express vividly the idea that feebleness in art is untruthfulness in effect. He



writes, therefore, of the "struggling caricature of the meaner mind, which heaps its foreground with colossal columns, and heaves impossible mountains into the encumbered sky." Ruskin here unconsciously imitates his thought by his vocabulary and syntax. Strip it of that imitation of sense by sound and structure, and what have you left? Say something else than "heaves impossible mountains into the encumbered sky." Say this, at a venture, "A poor artist paints mountains which could never have existed, in a sky which cannot conveniently hold them." Have you parted with no thought in losing the imitative adroitness of Ruskin's style? In such examples thought so masters expression, and yokes it to use, that style itself becomes thought. You cannot separate them by the change of so much as a syllable without loss.—PHELPS.

We are prone to regard literature as a strictly intellectual manifestation, when, nevertheless, the most conservative or preservative element of literature—humor—is scarcely an intellectual quality at all. It belongs rather to the emotional side of the mind. The dry light of pure reason has the charm of flattering our self-esteem by giving or seeming to give us an insight into the realities of things; but it has the defect of wanting individuality; it attains its present state just in proportion as it discards all personal flavor, and approaches a sort of algebraic impersonality. And when an exceptional mind, like Bacon's, succeeds in burnishing reason into wit, it retains its hold upon our sympathies, not because of its truth, but because that truth is stated with a perspicuity and brilliance peculiar to Bacon, depending not upon the extent of Bacon's information, but upon the admirable strength and subtlety of his mental faculties. In order to realize this, we have only to reflect that the same truth, otherwise organized and presented by an inferior intelligence, would fail to establish a hold upon us. What really fascinates us is not the white unmodified glare of the absolute, but the various-colored rays produced by the passage of that glare through the finite medium of human minds; and however diligently the generations of men may celebrate the eternal verities, nothing is more likely than that the eternal verities, considered in themselves, have but the faintest attraction for mankind. It belongs to our nature that we should be to ourselves of paramount mutual interest; and the ground of this interest is humor in its broadest sense. But humor—literary humor especially—has been conventionally limited to a narrower significance than this, and its possession in any noticeable degree is limited to comparatively few writers. Like tone in painting and expression in music, it is a matter of temperament; and its value, when genuine, is as permanent and as inexhaustible as human nature itself.—*The Spectator*.

**Naturalness**, therefore, so far from being opposed to style, is the one thing a good style secures.

Whenever a man poetically gifted expresses his best thoughts *in his best words*, then we have the style which is natural to him, and which, if he be a true poet, is sure to be a good style.—**SHAIRP**.

What is naturalness of style? We answer, those qualities which are found peculiar to an individual *when science and art have developed what is good and removed what is bad among his personal characteristics*. It is only by knowledge and training that our natural gifts and energies can be discovered and distinguished

from such wrong prejudices and bad habits as are the results of false instruction early in life.

Naturalness may be, and often is, understood to be that quality which is peculiar to an individual, or peculiar to that which is written or spoken by him spontaneously on any occasion, at any period of life. In this sense the communications of the most ignorant and immature minds have a seeming naturalness; but in many cases of this kind it is ultimately found that what seemed natural was sheer affectation, the checkered effect of indiscriminate imitation, or the random effusion of brazen independence, or else the modest mistake of one who has a wrong object or an unwise aim.—HERVEY.

**The End in View** on the writer's part should be exact expression of his thought. This is a difficult attainment. Of all arts the art of speech is most intricate, its mastery most delicate. Some of his sentences will cost the beginner hours, days, weeks. The most clever and experienced writer will weigh synonyms in his mind before he pens his last paragraph. But the artist is distinguished from the artisan in that he will accept no ill-fitting word or phrase. Long as the search may be, he will turn his thought over and over in his mind till it has clothed itself in the verbal garb that alone befits it.

Sydney Smith said of Dr. Parr, "He never seems hurried by his subject into obvious [inevitable] language." In other words, his thoughts were never clearly defined; he was contented with vague, general, botchy expression.

The collocation of words is so artificial in Shakspeare and Milton, that you may as well think of pushing a brick out of a wall with your forefinger, as attempt to remove a word out of any of their finished passages.

The amotion or transposition will alter the thought, or the feeling, or at least the tone. They are as pieces of mosaic work, from which you cannot strike out the smallest block without making a hole in the picture.—*Quarterly Review*.

v. p. 34  
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Cowper possessed above all other modern poets the power of bending the most stubborn and intractable words in the language around his thinking, so as to fit its every indentation and irregularity of outline, as a ship-carpenter adjusts the planking, grown flexible in his hands, to the exact mould of his vessel.—**HUGH MILLER.**

We proceed to a more particular examination of that particular quality of style which renders it intelligible. We denominate it plainness. A thing is plain (*planus*), when it is laid out open and smooth upon a level surface. An object is in plain sight when the form and shape of it are distinctly visible. Chaucer, in his "Canterbury Tales," makes the franklin, the English freeholder of his day, to say, when called upon for his story :

I never lerned rhetorike certain.  
Thing that I speke, it mote be bare and plain.

This quotation shows that in Chaucer's time rhetoric was the opposite of a lucid and distinct presentation of truth. In his age it had become excessively artificial in its principles, and altogether mechanical in its applications. Hence the plain, clear-headed Englishman, whose story turns out to be told with a simplicity and perspicuity and raciness that renders it truly eloquent, supposed that it must necessarily be faulty in style, because his own good sense and keen eye made it impossible for him to discourse in the affected and false rhetoric of the school of that day. For this plainness of style is the product of sagacity and keenness. A sagacious understanding always speaks in plain terms. A keen vision describes like an eye-witness.—**SHEDD.**

Once more: Mastery of language includes a retentive control of a vocabulary, and of varieties of English construction, by which they shall always be at hand for unconscious use. Do we not often fret for the right word, which is just outside the closed door of memory? We know that there is such a word; we know that it is precisely the word we want; no other can fill its place; we saw it mentally a short half-hour ago, but we beat the air for it now. The power we crave is the power to store words within reach, and hold them in mental reserve till they are wanted, and then to summon them by the unconscious vibration of a thought. Nothing can give it to us but study and use of the language in long-continued and critical practice. It is the slow fruitage of a growing mind.

Walter Scott, for instance, saunters through the streets of Edinburgh, and overhears a word, which, in its colloquial connections, expresses a shade of thought which is novel to him. He pauses, and makes a note of it, and walks on, pondering it, till it has made a nest for itself in his brain; and at length that word reappears in one of the most graphic scenes in the "Fortunes of Nigel." . . .

Washington Irving relates that he was once riding with Thomas Moore in Paris, when the hackney-coach went suddenly into a rut, out of which it came with such a jolt as to send their heads bumping against the roof. "By Jove, I've got it!" cried Moore, clapping his hands in great glee. "Got what?" said Irving. "Why," said the poet, "that word which I've been hunting for for six weeks to complete my last song. That rascally driver has jolted it out of me."—**PHELPS.**

**To affect** a particular style is of course ridiculous. Whatever possible value an essay may have comes from

its expression of the genuine thought of the writer. If his thoughts be noble, and he be able to give them adequate expression, his essay will be noble; but if his thoughts are trivial, and he tries to express them in such language as some one has used to express noble thoughts, his weazened thoughts will seem all the more shrunken in the flowing word-garments that flap around them. Besides, *sign. wige wige* small thoughts have a place and a value as well as great ones. David could not fight in Saul's armor, but when fitly clad in his mountain costume he could do execution impossible to the burly king.

I aped Johnson, I preached Johnson. It was a youthful folly, a very great folly. I might as well have attempted to dance a hornpipe in the dress of Gog and Magog. My puny thoughts could not sustain the load of words in which I tried to clothe them.—ROBERT HALL.

Aim at things, and your words will be right without aiming. Guard against love of display, love of singularity, love of seeming original. Aim at meaning what you say, and saying what you mean.—NEWMAN.

But if he is a thinker, who has seen some great truths more penetratingly, and has felt them more profoundly than other men have done, then in this sense a thinker Carlyle certainly was. Isolated truths there may have been, but isolated truths were all he cared or hoped to see; he felt too keenly the mystery of things ever to fancy that he or any other man would see them all in well-rounded harmony. It was just because he saw and felt some truths so keenly, that he was enabled to paint them in words so vividly. It was the insight that was in him which made him a word-painter; without that insight word-painting becomes a mere trick of words.—SHAIRP.

An amusing account is given by Lord Macaulay of a criticism by Sheridan upon the style and manner of Mr. Fox and Lord Stormont in the British Parliament. Sheridan had returned one morning from the meeting of Parliament, and a friend asked him for the news of the day. He replied that he had enjoyed a laugh over the speeches of those two men. He said that Lord Stormont began by declaring in a slow, solemn, nasal monotone that, "when—he—considered—the enormity—and the—unconstitutional—tendency

—of the measures—just—proposed, he was—hurried—away in a—torrent—of passion—and a—whirlwind—of im—pet—u—os—i—ty." Mr. Fox he described as rising with a spring to his feet, and beginning, with the rapidity of lightning, thus: "Mr. Speaker such is the *magnitude* such the *importance* such the *vital interest* of the question that I cannot but *implore* I cannot but *adjure* the House to come to it with the utmost *calmness* the utmost *coolness* the utmost *deliberation*."—PHELPS.

**The False Idea** that style is something superimposed, like a cupola, upon a structure that would be complete without it, has led to false views of the province of rhetoric, and to false ideals on the part of young writers.

"For esteeming any man purely on account of his rhetoric, I would as soon choose a pilot for a good head of hair," said Seneca. But rhetoric is to the statesman what skill is to the pilot. The statesman may be a traitor, in spite of great oratorical ability; and the pilot may be in league with wreckers, however accurate his knowledge of the coast and of the vessel. But rhetoric will enable the statesman to say what he means, and to say it convincingly, thus insuring him against blundering and weakness; just as skill will secure the pilot against unwittingly running upon a hidden rock.

That rhetorical skill is not universal or undesirable in office-holders may be inferred from the following official notices. (See also pages 297-300.)

The Connecticut Legislature passed a bill for paying the town clerk of New Haven for "time spent in deciphering those portions of the town records which are partly or wholly illegible." How much time was used by the clerk in deciphering wholly illegible records is not stated.

A post in Ansonia, Conn., bore a card with the following inscription:

"There did a young Pig Stray away on the 18th of the present month from George Thomas of West Ansonia or Wendy Hill any person or persons Seeing or giving information of the Pig would confer a great favor on the A Bove."

The pig is supposed to have gone after a spelling-book.

A Common Councilman who was on the Committee of Public Instruction in Fall River, Mass., drafted the following order:

"Ordered that the super in tender of streets is heir By uthorized 2 erect and mantane 2 street lites on john street."

Their list of unprotected and imprisoned animals noted one day last week such hitherto unheard of creatures as "too nufoodlen dogs" and "four littel kream collord doges." Divers companions in misery are described with equal fidelity as "won yellor dog" and "seven broun dogs." If to a wretched animal's death could be added a pang, it would be the knowledge that his obituary called him a littel kream collord doge.—*N. Y. Tribune*.

The late Hon. Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts spent the larger part of his mature life as a member of legislative bodies. For years he was the Mentor of the Massachusetts Legislature at a time when his politics put him always in a minority on any political measure. Yet he saved the State from much unconstitutional legislation by his power of command over the English language. It has been said that no suit at law is known to have been brought into court by any lawyer, in which the success of the suit depended on proving to be unconstitutional or defective any statute of which Caleb Cushing had the control in the committee which framed it. He was able to say, and to assist legislators to say, so exactly what was meant, that no clear-headed advocate could misunderstand the statute, or find a flaw in it by which to sustain a lawsuit. The explanation of that rare power of his of precise utterance, as given by those who knew him best, is, that he read and conversed in half-a-dozen languages, and made language the study of his life.—PHELPS.

*V. 298.*

**The Qualities** of style may be considered under the heads of

**P**URITY,  
 PROPRIETY,  
 PRECISION,  
 PERSPICUITY,  
 POWER,  
 PERFECTION.

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### TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

#### Style.

Matter vs. Manner, p. 342.

On the other hand, p. 344.

The best definitions, p. 344.

Naturalness, p. 346.

The end in view, p. 347.

Affecting a particular style, p. 348.

The false idea that style is superimposed, p. 350.

The qualities of style, p. 351.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### PURITY.

But how can Purity, which is merely a negative quality, the absence of gross blunders, be considered an element of Style, which is the positive manifestation of individuality? I reply, as cleanliness is an attribute of beauty of countenance, not entering into it, but essential to it. Besides, a scrupulous regard for correctness is in itself a manifestation of individuality, and a most pleasing one when not excessive.

**Purity** requires the use of (i.) English Words, (ii.) in accordance with Authorized Definitions, (iii.) in Grammatical Construction. In accordance with the usual classification, subdivisions (ii.) and (iii.) will be considered under the head of Propriety.

Purity, it was said, implies three things. Accordingly in three different ways it may be injured. First, the words may not be English. This fault hath received from grammarians the denomination of *barbarism*. Secondly, the construction of the sentence may not be in the English idiom. This hath got the name of *solecism*. Thirdly, the words and phrases may not be employed to express the precise meaning which custom hath affixed to them. This is termed *impropriety*.—CAMPBELL.

(i.) **English Words** are those accepted by (a) Present, (b) National, (c) Reputable Usage.

(a) **Present Usage** excludes words that are (1) Obsolete, or (2) Novel. The general rule has been thus expressed :

Be not the first by whom the new is tried,  
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.—POPE.



(1) **Obsolete Words** are those once in good usage that have passed out of speech and writing.

Thus, Thackeray, putting a novel into the form of an autobiography of the age of Queen Anne, has these expressions: "And so the sylvester night passed away;" "Our troops were drawn up in battalia;" "Who resplended in purple and gold lace."

*Examples.*—Spenser, pathetic, speaks of a lady's face "blubbered with tears," and Hooker in a grave sermon warns sinners of the grave danger of "popping down into the pit."—MARSH.

As on the way I itenerated,  
A rurall person I obviated,  
Interrogating times transitation,  
And of the passage demonstration.  
My apprehension did, ingenious, scan  
That he was meerely a simplitian.  
So, when I saw he was extravagant,  
Unto the obacure vulgar consonant,  
I bad him vanish most promiscuously,  
And not contaminate my company.—ROWLANDS, 1600.

"Whereas, yf, in his true speech, he has asked him what was the clock, and which had bin his way, his ignorance might of the simplitian been informed in both."—VERSTEGAN: *A Restitution*, etc.

(2) **Novelties** are either ( $\alpha$ ) wholly new words, ( $\beta$ ) expansions or contractions of old words, or ( $\gamma$ ) combinations of old words.

( $\alpha$ ) **New Words** are, in any spoken language, not only inevitable but desirable. Their coinage should, however, be restricted by the following principles:

1. *New Things and New Thoughts need new words.* Shakspeare's vernacular could have had no word that represents oxygen; Addison never had occasion to speak of the phonograph. "How could the idea of a *post-office* be expressed in Greek," asks De Quincey, "or the idea of a *coquette* in Hebrew?" As civilization invents, distin-

guishes, refines, its vocabulary must keep pace with its ideas.

### TECHNICAL WORDS.

**Necessity.**—It is occasionally lamented that we give to new things and thoughts new words derived from the Greek, instead of words made up by combination of familiar words. Such critics would have us call the telegraph the “far-off-writer,” the telephone the “far-off-speaker,” etc. The shallowness of this criticism has been exposed by Marsh. He says:

The simple word *verb* is preferable to any other designation, not because when we study etymology we find it truly descriptive as indicating the relative importance of this word in the period, but precisely for the opposite reason, namely, that to English ears it is not descriptive at all, but purely arbitrary, and therefore is susceptible of exact definition, and not by its very form suggestive of incongruous images or mistaken theory. . . .

Our substantive *acid*, for instance, is Latin, but for want of a native term, we employ it as a conjugate noun to the adjective *sour*, and it has become almost as familiar a word as *sour* itself. Chemistry adopted *acid* as the technical name of a class of bodies of which those first recognized in science were recognized by sourness of taste. But as chemical knowledge advanced, it was discovered that there were compounds precisely analogous in essential character which were not sour, and consequently *acidity* was but an accidental quality of some of these bodies, not a necessary or universal characteristic of all. It was thought too late to change the name, and accordingly in all the European languages the term *acid*, or its etymological equivalent, is now applied to rock-crystal, quartz, and flint. In like manner, from a similar misapplication of *salt* in scientific use, chemists class the substance of which junk-bottles, French mirrors, windows, and opera-glasses are made among the *salts*, while, on the other hand, analysts have declared that the essential character not only of other so-called salts, but also of common kitchen-salt, the salt of salts, had been mistaken; that salt is not a salt, and accordingly have excluded that substance from the class of bodies upon which, as their truest representative, it had bestowed its name. . . .

In the nomenclature of chemistry, to designate the bodies which, because analysis is not yet carried beyond them, are provisionally termed simple substances, we employ Greek compounds, giving to them by formal definition, and therefore arbitrarily, a precise, distinct, rigorously scientific meaning, excluding all other direct or collateral, proper or figurative significations. In the German chemical nomenclature these bodies are designated by Teutonic compounds derived from roots as trivial as any in the language. The words *carbon*, *hydrogen*, *oxygen*, *nitrogen*, employed in English, do not

recall their etymology, and their meaning is gathered only from technical definition. They express the entire scientific notion of the objects they stand for, and are abridged definitions, or rather signs of definitions, of those objects. They are to the English student as purely intellectual symbols as the signs of addition, subtraction, and equality in algebra, or, to use a more appropriate simile, as their initials C for carbon, H for hydrogen, O for oxygen, and the like, which, in conjunction with numerals, are used in expressing quantitative proportions in primary combinations. The corresponding German compounds, *Kohl-Stoff*, *Wasser-Stoff*, *Sauer-Stoff*, and *Stick-Stoff*, *coal-stuff*, *water-stuff*, *sour-stuff*, and *choke-stuff*, express, each, only a single one of the characteristics of the body to which they are applied, to say nothing of the unphilosophical tendency of thus grossly materializing and vulgarizing our conception of agencies so subtle and ethereal in their nature.

Of a like necessity in metaphysics, Coleridge says :

"You ask me *why I use words that need explanation?* Because (I reply) on this subject there are no others! Because the darkness and the main difficulties that attend it are owing to the vagueness and ambiguity of the words in common use, and which preclude all explanation for him who has resolved that none is required. Because there is already a falsity in the very phrases, 'words in common use,' 'the language of common sense.' Words of most frequent use they may be, common they are not; but the language of the market, and, as such, expressing *degrees* only, and therefore incompetent to the purpose whenever it becomes necessary to designate the *kind* independent of all degree. The philosopher may and often does employ the same words as in the market; but does this supersede the necessity of a previous explanation? As I referred you before to the botanist, so now to the chemist. Light, heat, charcoal, are every man's words. But *fused* or *invisible* light? The *frozen* heat? Charcoal in its simplest form as *diamond*, or as black-lead? Will a stranger to chemistry be worse off, would the chemist's language be less likely to be understood by his using different words for distinct meanings, as carbon, caloric, and the like?"

**Proper Use.**—Unusual technical words should be employed only where scientific accuracy is demanded and expected. To insert into speech or writing intended for the public a phraseology adapted only to the professional study indicates pedantry, if not empiricism.

The bulletins of the condition of the late President Garfield during his illness gave opportunity for criticism. Here are some translations by the *New York Sun*.

## MEDICAL.

Sometimes upon awaking from sleep he has had temporary hallucinations, such as might have been expected in a patient in his condition. These manifestations are caused by the want of perfect nutrition for the brain and by the toxic condition of the system.—Dr. BLISS, August 23.

## ENGLISH.

He is out of his head at times.

Judging from the reports, I concluded the symptoms of pyæmia existed prior to the operation made for the opening of the first abscess or first collection of confined pus. If any doubt had existed prior to the appearance of the inflamed condition of the parotid gland as regards pyæmia being present and acting an important part in the concatenation of the President's system, none can exist now. Pyæmia occurring during the progress of severe surgical injuries is regarded as of the utmost gravity, and as a suspected prognostic of a fatal termination.—DR. CARROCHAN, reported in the *Herald*, August 23.

I have continued to feel the greatest confidence in his recovery.—DR. BLISS, August 22.

The pus has probably been poisoning the blood for a month. There is no doubt of it now. In such cases the patient is likely to die.

I hope he will get well.

It was Herbert Spencer who made the following definition of evolution :

Evolution is a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity, through continuous differentiations and integrations.

It was the mathematician Kirkman who translated the definition into what he considered plain English :

Evolution is a change from a nohowish, untalkaboutable, all-alikeness, to a somehowish, and in-general-talkaboutable not-at-all-alikeness, by continuous somethingelseifications and sticktogetherations.

In a recent scientific journal I find this sentence :

Begoniaceæ, by their anthero-connectival fabric indicate a close relationship with anaceo-hydrocharideu-nymphaoid forms, an affinity confirmed by the serpentarioid flexuoso-nodulous stem, the lirioidendroid stipules, and clasoid and victorioid foliage of a certain Begonia, and if considered hypogynous, would, in their triquetrous capsule, alate seed, apetalism, and tufted stamination, represent the floral fabric of *Nepenthes*, itself of aristolochioid affinity, while by its pitched leaves, directly belonging to *Sarracenia* and *Dionæas*.—MARSH.

Considered as a representation of the actual language of life, it is a violation of the truth of costume to cram with technical words the conversation of a technical man. All men, except the veriest, narrowest pedants in their craft, avoid the language of the shop, and a small infusion of native sense of propriety prevents the most ignorant laborer from obtruding the dialect of his art upon those with whom he communicates in reference to matters not pertaining to it. Every man affects to be, if not socially above, yet intellectually independent of and superior to his calling, and if in this respect his speech bewray him, it will be by words used in mere joke, or by such peculiarities of speech, as without properly be-

longing to the exercise of his profession have been occasioned by it.—MARSH.

*Technical Metaphors* and comparisons should in like manner be avoided. Even Campbell, who says that "in strict propriety technical words should not be considered as belonging to the language because not in use or understood by the generality even of readers," uses the following figure :

Humor, when we consider the contrariety of its effects, contempt and laughter (which constitute what in one word is termed *derision*), to that sympathy and love often produced by the pathetic, may in respect of these, be aptly compared to a concave mirror, when the object is placed beyond the focus ; in which case it appears by reflection both diminished and inverted, circumstances which happily adumbrate the contemptible and the ridiculous. — (i. 58.)

*Many words* once purely technical have entered into common use, and may now be employed with freedom. Just where to draw the line it is not always easy to tell ; but where there is doubt as to whether a word will be understood, it is a safe rule to employ some other, or even a circumlocution.

Addison objected (*Spectator*, No. 297) that Milton's *cornice*, *culminate*, *equator*, and *zenith* were too technical for ordinary apprehension.—HALL.

William Taylor, casting ridicule on a book in the *Monthly Review* (1798), introduces the following words as unintelligible barbarisms :

"Were we endeavoring to characterize this work in the dialect peculiar to Professor Kant, we should observe that its *intensive* like its *extensive* magnitude is small ; as a detached disquisition or as a contribution to the theory of taste it is alike unimportant ; its *subjective* is as slight as its *objective* worth. Of the author we cannot but suspect that his *empirical* acquaintance with words of taste is not comprehensive ; his *receptivity* for *aesthetic* gratification not delicate ; his *transcendental* deduction of the categories of criticism neither *discretive* nor *exhaustive* ; and that the *phenomena* of beauty, with respect to him, rank among the *noumena*.—HALL.

*New words*, as representing new ideas, are also introduced by intercourse with other nations, especially by commerce. Most of the names upon a grocer's catalogue have accompanied from other nations the importation of the articles they represent.

2. *Masters of style* may coin such words as in their judgment seems necessary or desirable.

De Quincey makes it a test of an author's power how many new words, phrases, idioms, significations, he is enabled to engraft upon his native tongue. But with this the beginner has nothing to do. Even long experience and unquestioned recognition leave it still a perilous task to propose a new word.

No author ever shackled himself by more absurd restrictions, not even the lipogrammatists, or those who built altars and hatched eggs in verse, than Mr. Fox, when he resolved to use no other words in his *History* than were to be found in Dryden.—SOUTHEY.

I conceive that words are like money, not the worse for being common, but that it is the stamp of custom alone that gives them circulation or value. I am fastidious in this respect, and would almost as soon coin the currency of the realm as counterfeit the king's English. I never invented or gave a new and unauthorized meaning to any word but one single one—the term *impersonal*, applied to feelings; and that was in an abstruse metaphysical discussion, to express a very difficult distinction.—HAZLITT.

We must not be too frequent with the mint, every day coining, nor fetch words from the extreme and utmost ages. Words borrowed of antiquity do lend a kind of majesty to style, and are not without their delight sometimes. For they have the authority of years, and out of their intermission do win to themselves a kind of grace-like newness. But the eldest of the *present*, and newest of the *past* language is best.—BEN JONSON.

It is a doubtful experiment with any man to add a word to his native tongue. The creation of a word is a great assumption over human thought. It is a challenge to a nation's mind. It may be an assault on a nation's prejudices. It may be resisted by the whole momentum of a nation's history. It may be ejected by the force of a nation's

whims. The chances are as a thousand to one against its success. Such a word may have every scholarly quality in its favor, and yet it may die of sheer neglect. It dies without so much as a burial. The nation often does not resist it, does not argue about it, but simply says, "We do not want it." Cicero had no superior as an authority in Roman literature, yet he failed more frequently than he succeeded in his attempts to improve the vernacular of his countrymen. The same is true of Milton and of Coleridge, both of whom were students of the forces of language, masters of racy English, and experimenters in the creation of novel words.—PHELPS.

COLERIDGE, in his work "On Church and State," makes use of the following extraordinary words: *Influencie*, *extroitive*, *retroitive*, and *productivety*. Bentley uses: *Commentitious*, *allene*, *neogoe*, and *excribe*. But no other writers adopted these words; a clear proof that they were not wanted.

Charles Lamb used in his writings several words which have not succeeded in maintaining a place in the language. Among them may be named *agnise*, *burgson*, and *arride*.

In the writings of the late N. P. Willis we meet with such terms as the following: An *unletsplable* nature, *teideawakeity*, *plumptitude*, *pocketually* speaking, *betweenty*, and *go-awayness*! In the same gentleman's writings we occasionally come across such elegant forms of expression as *whipping creation*, *flogging Europe*, a *heap* of opinions, *tarnation* quick, etc. These and all such must be looked upon as abortions or deformities of our language; and no English writer who has any respect for his own reputation should ever think of countenancing, far less of adopting, such monstrosities.—GRAHAM.

It is not easy for me to write without a strong sense of loathing the name of this acrid fantast and idolizer of brute force—at best a bad copy of all that is most objectionable in Hobbes. The word *international*, introduced by the immortal Bentham, and Mr. Carlyle's *gigmanity*—to coin which, by the way, it was necessary to invent facts—are significantly characteristic of the utilitarian philanthropist and of the utilitarian misanthropist, respectively.—HALL.

In *The Doctor* Southey gives himself free scope, as a verbarian, much after the way of Rabelais, Thomas Nash, Taylor the water-poet, or Feltham. These are a few of his ventures there:

agathokakological.	herbarism.	quasically.
alamodality.	hippogony.	quintelem.
anywhereness.	heplarchy.	quizzify.
bibliogony.	humorology.	quotationipotent.
caodemonize.	iatrachy.	resemblant.
calomisticate.	idolify.	semiramise.
circumambagious.	insomnolence.	showee.
cornification.	kittenship.	shillishallier.
crab-grade (v. n.)	magnisonant.	stelliscript.
crazyologist.	minify.	stockinger.
critickin.	mottocrat.	theologo-jurist.
dendranthepology.	nepotions.	threnodial.
disrecommendation.	obituarist.	trimestral.
domesticize.	omni erudite.	typarchical.
errabund.	omnisignificance.	uglyographize.
etceterarist.	oxmanship.	unegofy.
everywhereness.	parenthesize.	unipefy.
facsimileship.	paupostfuturatively.	unparallellable.
felisophy.	pentametrize.	unprosperity.
ferrivorous.	personificator.	utopianizer.
gelastica.	philofelist.	whiskerandced.
gignitive.	philothelist.	soöphillat.
heartthead.		

But even in the pages of the *Quarterly Review*, he allowed himself such terms, some of them very good ones, as [here a list of sixty-six words is given, including anthroppha-

gistic, batracephagous, floccinancipilification, etc.] . . . And yet Southey wrote to William Taylor in 1874, "Do sometimes ask yourself the question whether the word you are about to use be in the dictionary or not."—ROBBARDS' "Memoir of William Taylor," I. 452.—HALL.

Coleridge says:

Unusual and new-coined words are doubtless an evil, but vagueness, confusion, and imperfect conveyance of our thoughts are a far greater.

And again:

To convey his meaning precisely is a debt which an author owes to his readers. He therefore who, to escape the charge of pedantry, will rather be misunderstood than startle a fastidious critic with an unusual term, may be compared to the man who should pay his creditor in base or counterfeit coin, when he had gold or silver ingots in his possession to the precise amount of the debt; and this, under the pretence of their unshapeliness and want of the mint-impression.

The following quotation illustrates his meaning:

This catholic spirit was opposed to the gnostic or peculiar spirit—the humor of fantastical interpretation of the old Scripture, into Christian meanings. It is this gnosis, or *knowingness*, which the apostle says puffeth up—not *knowledge* as we translate it.

3. *Temporary Coinage* of a word for a peculiar effect, especially a humorous effect, is occasionally permissible.

Professor James Russell Lowell, for example, is one of the most scholarly critics and authors in our language. A word coined by him would carry all the authority which any one man's name can give to a word. But when he coins, as he does, such words as "cloudbergs," and "otherworldliness," and "Dr. Wattsiness," he descends from style to slang. He does not expect to see them in the next edition of Worcester's Dictionary. He would be ashamed to see them there with his name as their authority. . . . He knows, and the world of scholars knows, that his own scholarly reputation will bear such occasional departures from



good English, somewhat as a very saintly man can bear to be seen carrying a flask of brandy in the street. That which is a literary peccadillo from Professor Lowell's pen may be unscholarly slovenliness from one unknown to fame.—PHELPS.

Coleridge! I devoutly wish that Fortune, who has made sport with you so long, may play one fresh move, throw you into London or some place near it, and there *snugify* you for life.—C. LAMB.

The roads are not passable,  
Not even jackassable;  
And all who would travel 'em  
Must turn out and gravel 'em.—*Nashville American.*

4. *Factitious Notoriety* given to a new word sometimes becomes converted into popularity.

The manager of a theatre in Dublin once passed an evening with certain amateurs in literature; and he staked a sum of money on the proposal that he would create a word which should belong to no language on the globe, and should be absolutely void of sense, yet it should become the subject of the common talk of the town in twenty-four hours. The wager was accepted. He then sent his servants through the most densely peopled streets of the city, with directions to chalk in large capitals the letters QUIZ on each alternate door and shop-window. The next day was Sunday. Stores were closed, and the throng in the streets had leisure to read the enigmatical letters. Every one who saw it repeated it to his neighbor; and his neighbor responded, "What does 'quiz' mean?" It had no meaning. No language owned it. Scholarly taste scouted it. Yet everybody laughed at it, and that gave it a meaning. From that day to this, scholarship has been compelled to recognize the word, and to use it as good, sound English.—PHELPS.

An incident which excites the surprise or appeals to the sympathies of a whole people will often give a very general and permanent currency to a new word, or an expression not before in familiar use. Take for example the word *coincidence*. The verb *coincide* and its derivative noun are of rather recent introduction into our language. They are not found in *Minshen*, and they occur neither in *Shakspeare* nor in *Milton*, though they may perhaps have been employed by scientific writers at as early a date. They belong to the language of mathematics, and were originally applied to points and lines. Thus, if one mathematical point be superimposed upon another, or one straight line be superimposed upon another straight line between the same two points; or if two lines follow the same course, whatever be its curve, between two points, then in the first case the two

points, in the latter two the two lines, are said to coincide, and their conformity of position is called coincidence. In like manner, any two events happening at the same period, or any two acts or states beginning at the same moment, are said to coincide in time, and the conjugate noun, coincidence, is employed to express the fact that they are so contemporaneous. These words soon passed into common use, in the same sense, and were applied also figuratively to identity of opinion or character in different individuals, as well as to many other cases of close similarity or resemblance; but they still belonged rather to the language of rules and of science than to the daily speech of common life. On the Fourth of July, 1826, the semi-centennial jubilee of the declaration of American independence, Thomas Jefferson, the author, and John Adams, one of the signers of that remarkable manifesto, both also ex-Presidents, died, and this concurrence in the decease of distinguished men on the anniversary of so critical a point in their lives and the history of their country, was noticed all over the world, but more especially in the United States, as an extraordinary coincidence. The death of Mr. Monroe, also an ex-President, on the Fourth of July, a year or two after, gave a new impulse to the circulation of the word coincidence, and in this country at least it at once acquired and still retains a far more general currency than it had ever possessed before.—MARSH.

5. *Popular Need* of a new word becomes recognized, now and then, and the word takes its place not through scholars but in spite of them.

In this introduction of new words, moreover, the incorrect expression really has the better chance of acceptance, and for two reasons—firstly, the odds are vastly in favor of its being wanted, and consequently made by an unscientific person rather than by a philologist; and secondly, it has not only a start, but a very long start, of the more accurate term. It almost invariably becomes general in conversational use before it appears in literature; it regularly germinates, buds, blooms in conversation; and it is mostly in the form of a fixed result, as a sort of gathered print, that it takes its place in written speech; while the better word which might supplant it must, to change my metaphor, raise but a baby hand, and utter a trembling cry against the strength of maturity and the shout of a man.—BLACKLEY.

*The Newspapers* are not, however, to be regarded as exponents of the popular need, nor are words to be accepted because employed by the morning journals.

*Newspaper English.*—"The tramp Roderick, who burgled the two houses on West Hill last week and was jailed Sunday night, broke out last evening, but was policed clear to the river, where, finding escape impossible, he wharfed himself and suicided. The

body piled itself at the bridge and will be coronered in the morning. Truly, in the midst of life, we are deathed."

Mr. Geo. H. McChesney, the extensive lumber dealer, of Syracuse, who supplies most of the Auburn trade, and Charles F. Saule, a retired banker of the saline city, with their wives, Sundied in Auburn.—*Auburn Advertiser*.

GENERAL VIEW.—Of new words we may enumerate at least five distinct sources: (1) Those which may be called inspired are due, almost wholly, to the common people; (2) others are elaborated by the learned; (3) others are imposed by conquest, as the Norman element of the English, and the Semitic element of the Indian vernaculars; (4) others, all the world over, are imported by commerce; (5) and others still are introduced from abroad by fashion, or borrowed thence for their usefulness. It is with the two first classes and the last that we are concerned practically. Inspired neoterisms, as springing from the needs of the illiterate, often respond to a general need, and are easily enfranchised. Besides, being mostly monosyllables, they are easy of remembrance, and, when not abbreviations, being found in the most obvious analogies, they are rarely exceptionable as illegitimate formations. However less immediately valuable for popular use, the coinages of scholars, in proportion as they supply recognized wants, likewise make good their value eventually by obtaining the rights of citizenship. Intercourse with foreign countries and their inhabitants contributes further to augment our lingual wealth. And thus our exchequer is constantly increasing; and, at the same time, its contents are constantly liable to mutation. Once it was not so, but nowadays we may accept as an indubitable argument of a nation's healthy activity, both intellectual and material, the fact of the expansiveness and mobility of its language.—HALL.

(*β*) **Expansion and Contraction** of old words is continually attempted. The former is usually the result of ambitious groping for impressiveness, like "preventative" for "preventive." The latter comes from the tendency in speech, as in other exertion, to escape all avoidable effort.

The most common contractions are of the verb with the adverb *not*, like "isn't," "won't" (see page 262). In colloquial speech and in familiar letters these may be indulged; but nowhere should "ain't" be employed for any purpose, nor should "don't" be used instead of "doesn't" in the third person singular.

(γ) **Combinations** of old words are most common in the double epithets affected by inferior writers.

Very few of these long-winded, long-waisted, long-tongued, long-tailed, and long-*erred* compounds are authorized English. The taste for them destroys the taste for monosyllabic words, on which the force of a spoken style so much depends. A subtle sympathy exists between these compounds and long, involuted sentences. Be not deceived, if occasionally they seem to strengthen style. In the general effect they dilute and flatten it; they invite a drawl in delivery; they are a drawl in expression. Few forms of mannerism run to such extremes as this, when once the scruples of good taste are broken down. Mrs. Henry Wood, in "Roland Yorke," speaks of the "not-attempted-to-be-concealed care." Another female author remarks upon "the-sudden-at-the-moment-though-from-lingering-illness-often-previously-expected death" of one of her heroines. It does not require scholarly erudition to decide that such a tape-worm as this has no proper place above ground. The taste which could tolerate it is hopeless barbarism. The next phase of such culture is cannibalism.—PHELPS.

The combining or compounding power is of different degrees in different languages, but in the Mexican language it is carried to an incredible extent. Here combinations are admitted so easily that the simplest ideas are buried under a load of accessories. For example, the word for a *priest* consists of eleven syllables, and is there called *notiazomuhuitzleopix-atatzin*, which means literally, *venerable minister of God, whom I love as a father*. A still more comprehensive word is *amatlacutloltlquitcaltaxtolahuitl*, which means *the reward given a messenger who brings a hieroglyphical map conveying intelligence*.—BLACKLEY.

Aristophanes has a word of fourteen syllables from six radicals, signifying meanly-early-rising-and-hurrying-to-the-tribunal-to-denounce-another-for-an-infraction-of-the-law-concerning-the-exportation-of-figs. In another case the same dramatist coins a word of seventy-two syllables, as the name of a dish composed of a great number of ingredients, and Richter quotes Forster as authority for a Sanscrit compound of one hundred and fifty-two syllables.—MARSH.

The first English poet who gave prominence to this power of combination was Chapman, who applied it with wonderfully happy

effect in his Homer's "Iliad," in translating the compound Greek epithets which so frequently occur in that poem, such as *swift-footed*, *wiry-wristed*, *white-armed*, *many-headed*, *rosy-fingered*, etc. Most of these were afterward adopted by Pope. There is a tendency in some modern English writers to carry this compounding power to an unwarrantable extent, a practice which should certainly be resisted, as being opposed to the genius of our language, and also giving evidence of aping after Germanic forms, and thus transgressing the proper limits of the language. The late Madame D'Arbly, in her "Memoirs of Dr. Burney," speaks of the "very-handsome, - though - no - longer - in - her - bloom" Mrs. Stevens.—BLACKLEY.

The authority of Milton and Shakspeare may be usefully pointed out to young authors. In the "Comus" and other early poems of Milton there is a superfluity of double epithets, while in "The Paradise Lost" we find very few, in "The Paradise Regained" scarce any. The same remark holds almost equally true of the "Love's Labor Lost," "Romeo and Juliet," "Venus and Adonis," and "Lucrece," compared with "Lear," "Macbeth," "Othello," and "Hamlet" of our great dramatist. The rule for the admission of double epithets seems to be this: either that they should be already denizens of our language, such as *blood-stained*, *terror-stricken*, *self-applauding*; or when a new epithet, or one found in books only, is hazarded, that it at least be one word, not two words made one by mere virtue of the printer's hyphen. A language which, like the English, is almost without cases, is indeed in its very genius unfitted for compounds. If a writer every time a compounded word suggests itself would seek for some other way of expressing himself, the chances are always greatly in favor of his finding a better word.—COLERIDGE.

Yet Charles Lamb writes to this very Coleridge :

There is a capital line in your sixth number :

This dark, frieze-coated, teeth-chattering month.

They are exactly such epithets as Burns would have stumbled on, whose poem on "The Ploughed-up Daisy" you seem to have had in mind.

(b) **National usage** excludes the use of words and constructions that are (1) Foreign, or (2) Provincial.

(1) **Foreign usage** may consist in (a) interpolation into English construction, as "She looked *triste*, poor thing;" or (β) adoption of foreign construction, with either foreign or English words.

(a) **Interpolations** of foreign words are advertisements of the writer's limited vocabulary. The late poet

and journalist Bryant used to say that he never felt the temptation to use a foreign word without being able to find in English a word that expressed his meaning with more exactness and felicity.

We need only glance into one of the periodical representatives of fashionable literature, or into a novel of the day, to see how serious this assault upon the purity of the English language has become. The chances are more than equal that we shall fall in with a writer who considers it a point of honor to choose all his most emphatic words from a French vocabulary, and who would think it a lamentable falling off in his style, did he write half a dozen sentences without employing at least half that number of foreign words. His heroes are always marked by an *air distingué*; his vile men are sure to be *blusés*; his lady friends never merely dance or dress well, they dance or dress *à merveille*; and he himself, when lolling on the sofa under the spirit of laziness, does not simply enjoy his rest, he luxuriates in the *dolce far niente*, and wonders when he will manage to begin his *magnum opus*. And so he carries us through his story, running off into hackneyed French, Italian, or Latin expressions, whenever he has anything to say which he thinks should be graphically or emphatically said. It really seems as if he thought the English language too meagre or too commonplace a dress in which to clothe his thoughts. The tongue which gave a noble utterance to the thoughts of Shakspeare and Milton is altogether insufficient to express the more cosmopolitan ideas of Smith, or Tomkins, or Jenkins! . . .

We have before us an article from the pen of a very clever writer, and, as it appears in a magazine which specially professes to represent the "best society," it may be taken as a good specimen of the style. It describes a dancing party, and we discover for the first time how much learning is necessary to describe a "hop" properly. The reader is informed that all the people at the dance belong to the *beau monde*, as may be seen at a *coup d'œil*; the *demi-monde* is scrupulously excluded, and in fact everything about it bespeaks the *haut ton* of the whole affair. A lady who has been happy in her half-dresser is said to be *coiffée à ravir*. Then there is the bold man to describe. Having acquired the *savoir faire*, he is never afraid of making a *faux pas*, but no matter what kind of conversation is started plunges at once *in medias res*. Following him is the fair *débutante*, who is already on the look-out for *un bon parti*, but whose *nos retroussés* is a decided obstacle to her success. She is of course accompanied by mamma *en grande toilette*, who, *entre nous*, looks rather *rhûlé* even in the gallight. Then, lest the writer should seem frivolous, he suddenly abandons the description of the dances, *vis-à-vis* and *dos-à-dos*, to tell us that Homer becomes tiresome when he sings of Βούβης πόρνα "Hop twice in a page. The supper calls forth a corresponding amount of learning, and the writer concludes his article after having aired his Greek, his Latin, his French, and, in a subordinate way, his English.

Of course this style has admirers and imitators. It is showy and pretentious, and everything that is showy and pretentious has admirers. The admixture of foreign phrases with our plain English produces a kind of Brummagem sparkle which people whose appreciation is limited to the superficial imagine to be brilliancy. Those who are deficient in taste and art education not unfrequently prefer a dashing picture by young Daub to a glorious cartoon by Raphael. The bright coloring of the one far more than counterbalances the lovely but unobtrusive grace of the other. In a similar way, young students are attracted by the false glitter of the French-paste school of composition, and instead of forming their sentences upon the beautiful models of the great English mas-

ters, they twist them into all sorts of unnatural shapes for no other end than they may introduce a few inappropriate French or Latin words, the use of which they have learned to think looks smart.—*Leeds Mercury*.

(*β*) **Adoption** of a foreign construction may be (1) simply the attempt to express one's self in that language instead of one's own, or (2) the conscious or unconscious use of English words in a foreign idiom.

(1) **To speak** another language when unnecessary is an affectation, and like all affectation a fit subject of ridicule.

Dr. Johnson sneeringly observed to Macklin, the dramatist, that literary men should converse in the learned languages, and immediately addressed him in Latin. Macklin knew nothing of Latin, but retorted by uttering a long sentence in Irish, whereupon the doctor returned to English, saying deferentially, "You may speak very good Greek, but I am not sufficiently versed in that dialect to converse with you fluently."

Kean, though not classically educated, was always anxious to create an impression to that effect, and therefore interlarded his conversation liberally with Latin, which was usually pretty bad. Once when Phillips, his secretary, was waiting for him at one of his nocturnal orgies, the following conversation occurred :

2 A.M.—*Phillips*. Waiter, what was Mr. Kean doing when you left the room ?

*Waiter*. Playing the piano, sir, and singing.

*Phillips*. Oh, then he's all right yet.

2.15.—*Phillips*. What is Mr. Kean doing now ?

*Waiter*. Making a speech, sir, about Shakspeare.

*Phillips*. He's getting drunk ; you'd better order the carriage.

2.30.—*Phillips*. What's he at now ?

*Waiter*. He's talking Latin, sir.

*Phillips*. Then he *is* drunk. We must get him away at once.

Lord Belgrave having clinched a speech in the House with a long Greek quotation, Sheridan in reply admitted the force of the quotation so far as it went, "but," said he, "had the noble lord proceeded a little further and completed the passage he would have seen that it applied the other way. Sheridan then spouted something, *ors rotundo*, which had all the *ais, ois, ouis, kous*, that give the wonted assurance of a Greek quotation ; upon which Lord Belgrave very promptly and handsomely complimented the honorable member on his readiness of recollection, and frankly admitted that the continuation of the passage had the tendency ascribed to it by Mr. Sheridan, and that he had overlooked it when he gave the quotation. On the breaking up of the House Fox, who piqued himself on having some Greek, went up to Sheridan and asked him, "Sheri-

dan, how came you so ready with that passage? It is certainly as you say, but I was not aware of it before you quoted it." It is unnecessary to say that there is no Greek at all in Sheridan's impromptu.—*Works*.

The *Home Journal* tells a funny story about Dickens and Thackeray. Once they were in Paris, and Thackeray, on going out, cautioned the servant not to let the fire go out: "*Gardez le feu.*" Thackeray's French pronunciation not being perfect, the servant understood the last word to be *feu*, instead of *feu*. consequently he was not to let the madman go out. When Thackeray got back, he found the hotel in great excitement, and Dickens, in a towering rage, stalking about, while the landlord declared that the madman insisted on going out. The people in the hotel had to unite their forces to hold him in.

(2) **Foreign Idioms** are never to be employed, except occasionally as a kind of suggestion, akin to quotation. Hence in translating from a foreign tongue, it is not sufficient to give the English equivalent of the words. Not "How do you carry yourself?" but "How do you do?" is the proper English rendering of "Comment vous portez-vous?"

**MAKING IT EASY FOR HIM.**—A number of Chinese have been at the Grand Hotel, New York. Young Mr. Smith, who wanted to have some fun, said to one of them who was making a puzzle out of the wooden toothpicks on the counter: "Indendee stoppee here longee?" "Sir?" said the Celestial. "Stoppee longee in New Yorkee?" repeated Mr. Smith, with a smile. "We shall remain in the city but a brief period," said the Pekin man, "prior to resuming our journey to Washington." Then he walked away, and the junior proprietor of the Grand ascertained that he had been talking to a Harvard graduate who spoke six different languages besides Chinese.—*Lancaster Intelligencer*.

**TOO LITERAL TRANSLATION.**—"Madame, what is there on the card for the dinner?" inquired the new boarder, at our boarding-house, as he seated himself at the table.

"Of the soup, of the beef, of the sheep, of the calf and of the poultry," replied she, "the which wish you?"

"A piece of the hen roasted," said he, "and of the apples of the ground."

"Wish you of the apples of the ground cooked to the water to the furnace?" demanded she.

"I prefer them cooked to the master of hotel," said he.

"We have not of cook French," said madame, sharply, "when the to board is of such good market it must that we sweat blood and water to make come together both ends," and madame wiped one tear from her eye.

"Oh, bring me what you have," said the new boarder, tendered to the instant; "but dispatch yourself, as I wish accompany of the friends to celebrate the funeral of a mis-



ter of two hours. Bring me in, same time, madame, if you please, of the pie to the eggs, and a cup of coffee, black, for the dessert."

**EASY FRENCH LESSONS.**—Does the handsome (*jolie*) miss take lessons of the good music-teacher? Oh, yes, the handsome miss takes lessons (*leçons*) of the good music-teacher. The hours of the good music-teacher are very short. Are the bills of the music-teacher also short? No, the bills of the music-teacher are very long. Do you know of other teachers besides the teacher of your sister's friend? Oh, yes, I know that of the son of the gardener. What is the matter (*qu'a-t-il*) with the music-teacher? Has he shame (*a-t-il honte*)? No, he is not ashamed, he is jealous.

Has the sister of the baker talent? No, she has not talent, but she has the "Maiden's Prayer." Has the grocer's brother the fine sonata? He has not the fine sonata, but he has "Tam O'Shanter." Can you hear the soft tone of the great violinist? No, I cannot hear the tone of the great violinist; that is why I applaud. Has the lady in the blue silk pain? No, she has no pain, but she is singing (*elle chante*); her hearers have pain.—*Musical Herald*.

A GENUINE CIRCULAR.—

ISAAC WEINBERG

Banker

HAMBURGH.

HAMBURGH, Date of the Poststamp.

LAUDABLE EXPEDITION!

By this I am so free as to direct the humble question to You, if You accept for me in Your estimable journal advertisements, for the Hamburgian-town and Brunswigian-country lottery?

In an affirmative case you will be so kind as to give me an answer on the following questions:

- 1) How often comes out Your journal?
- 2) What is the price of insertion for a line, resp. eighth, fourth part, half and whole page of your journal?
- 3) How broad (narrow) is a single column (how many n go in it) and how many alits counts the page?
- 4) After what sorte of writing (Nonpareille Petit, Garmond) do You account for the price of a line?
- 5) What a rebate do You consent me? I join still to my last question, that I am already since many years in a Direct intercourse with more than 500 german newspapers, and that all they offered me at the same conditions, which they grant the counter of announcements. With these I discount after agreement every 3 or 6 month; but I left it entirely to Your estimation, what concession You will consent me in concern of this, however I expect from Your side favorable conditions, because my orders being for the greatest part, considerable, and my advertisements of large extent.

Expecting a defrayed favorable answer I am with consideration

ISAAC WEINBERG.

(2) **Provincialisms** often become good English, but must be avoided while their use is still confined to a locality.

Thus, a majority of those that frequent them, call the Adirondack mountains "The North Woods," because they lie to the

north of the people of Southern and Central New York, whence most of the visitors come. But by the people of St. Lawrence county this same region is for a like reason known as "The South Woods." Hence to use either term in literature would produce ambiguity.

Take another illustration from the same region. No one that has travelled there with guides would think of referring to the baggage that accompanies one in the trips from one point to another except as "duffle." This is the recognized word throughout that region, but would be unintelligible elsewhere.

Again, a boy brought up on a Vermont farm would hear the word "clever" used only to indicate good-nature. A clever colt is one that can be readily handled; a clever man is one who accedes to most requests. But in literature the word is the adjective that corresponds with tact, indicating felicity in execution.

The question therefore arises, What is the standard of purity? Is it usage in my village, or in Boston, or in New York, or in London? Probably Mr. Richard Grant White is justified in assuming that the purest spoken English is to be heard in the best society of London. To us who do not enter that circle, it is adequately portrayed in the books of the standard English authors. The young writer will for a long time find in the dictionaries all the help he can make use of. By diligent study of these, by careful and critical reading, and by intelligent listening and discussion, he will eventually acquire a sense of fitness that will rarely mislead him in his choice of words.

By accepted usage in speech we understand that which is practised or approved, consistently and advertently, by the best writers and speakers of any given time. These qualifications are necessary, for Lancelotti well observes, "Good writers are authorities for only what is good, and by no means, and in no degree, for what is bad, which may be found even in them."—HALL.

One writer, therefore, in these days, shall not follow Piers the Plowman, nor Gower, nor Lydgate, nor yet Chaucer, for their language is now not of use with us; neither yet shall he take the terms of the Northmen, such as they use in daily talk, whether they be noblemen or gentlemen or their best clerks, nor in effect any speech used beyond the River Trent; though no man can deny that theirs is the purest English Saxon at this day. Yet it is not so courtly, nor so current as our Southern English is, no more is the far Western man's speech. He shall, therefore, take the usual speech of the Court, and that of London, and the shires lying about London, within sixty miles, and not much above.—PUTTENHAM, *Art of English Poetrie*, 1589.

(c) **Reputable usage** excludes the use of slang.

**Slang** may consist in words or expressions (1) that are unjustifiably created, or (2) that are misused.

(1) **Slang Words** no careful speaker will employ in any signification. They are low in origin, low in usage. The very sound of them locates a speaker as unerringly as a gilt watch-chain would.

Yet almost all the new words coined by the people in obedience to popular necessity have been regarded as slang when first employed. "Mob" is a contraction of *mobile vulgus*, and was sneered at contemptuously by Dean Swift; yet to-day it is indispensable. Which of the scores of words that assail our ears upon the street will be employed by the statesman of the next generation? No one knows; but the principle is that of the survival of the fittest. If the word is a necessity to the popular mind, it will hold its own in spite of those that are heedful of the words they use, and is in no need of their support. If it is not a necessity, it will disappear, no matter who uses it. The safe rule, for the young writer at least, is to wait till the word has been accepted by writers and speakers of unquestioned authority.

No expression can become a vulgarity which has not a broad foundation. The language of the vulgar hath its source in physics, in known, comprehended, and operative things.—LANDOR.

These vulgarisms and corruptions of language do not come at once into general use; they creep in stealthily; they often spring from ignorance or caprice; then they do some service in an humble way, in the market or the courts, ministering to the wants of the poor and the ignorant; then they attract the favor of the press in its least authoritative form, and finally, partly from assumption and partly from necessity, they come to be acknowledged as good citizens and freeholders in the realm.—*Quoted by SCHELE DE VERE.*

(2) **Slang Signification** is a greater danger to the young writer. So many words, admirable in themselves, and found in the works of the best authors, have been debased by unthinking misuse, that only vigilance and delicacy of apprehension can guard one against them.

The adjective "nice," for instance, has a definite and useful signification. Yet because it has been made an omnibus for expression of the most heterogeneous qualities (see page xxvi), it must be avoided, or used with an apology.

The adjective "genteel" has a noble lineage, and in definitions of the dictionaries and books of synonyms is still unimpeached. Yet in refined circles and in the best contemporary literature it is now used to express not what is refined, but what seeks to be so, and is characterized by uneasy consciousness of effort, far removed from the well-bred assurance of the lady and gentleman.

"Culture," again, is a word so indispensable that only a circumlocution will approximately express the idea it conveys; but it can no longer be freely used, since in newspaper columns every local politician is as "cultured" as he is "genial" and "high-toned." The last expression is so completely relegated to the class of people who have usurped it, that one gets a little shock of surprise to meet the following sentence in an Oxford lecture of Professor Shairp:

Again there are high-toned spirits which regard the world as a scene made to give scope for moral heroism.

The fact is, these words, especially those that denote social distinction of any kind, follow the experience of the fashions. A new shape of bonnet is introduced by some one to whom the community is accustomed to look for guidance in matters of taste. Hideous as it might have seemed if introduced under other auspices, it soon takes on by association of ideas the same air of fitness and beauty that the lady has always seemed to have about her, till presently any other shape seems out of date and unbecoming. But meantime it has been adopted and exaggerated by those looked upon as the worst-dressed persons in the community, and so gets associated with itself all the unpleasant ideas that their costumes have been in the habit of suggesting. It is now full time for a change, and when the leader of society appears in a new shape we are the more ready to receive it cordially because we are so heartily tired of the old.

In like manner, when words that are meant to be titles of admirable qualities are assumed by those who in the very assump-

tion of the title show the lack of the qualities the title indicates, the man of sense does not dispute with them as to the possession of the title, but simply declines it himself.

"You are no gentleman," screams an angry disputant.

"Do you consider yourself one?" is the quiet rejoinder.

"Yes, I do."

"Then I am glad you don't think me one."

And that is about all there is of it.

When the college instructor finds that the district-school teacher and the hair-dresser and the white-washer advertise themselves "Professor So-and-so," he does not protest; he simply prefers for the future to be called "Mr."

The Duke of Saxe-Weimar was, in Alabama, asked the question, "Are you the *man* that wants to go to Selma?" and upon assenting he was told, "Then I'm the *gentleman* that's going to drive you." Precisely the same thing occurred to Sir Charles Lyell: "I asked the master of the inn at Corning, who was very attentive to his guests, to find my coachman. He immediately called out in his bar-room, 'Where is the *gentleman* that brought this *man* here?' A few days before, a farmer in New York had styled my wife *woman*, though he called his own daughters *ladies*, and would, I believe, have extended that term to the maid-servant. I know of an orator who once said at a public meeting where bonnets predominated, "The *ladies* were the last at the Cross and the first at the Tomb!" The vulgarity of entering a traveller's name on the register of the house as "Mr. — and *lady*" is only surpassed by placing the same words on visiting-cards.—SCHELE DE VERE.

A clergyman reading in the Book of Daniel, and feeling uncertain of the pronunciation of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, referred to them a second time as *the same three gentlemen*.—ALFORD.

In a railroad car the seats were all full except one, which was occupied by a pleasant-looking Irishman, and at one of the stations a couple of evidently well-bred and intelligent young ladies came in to procure seats. Seeing none vacant, they were about to go into the next car, when Patrick arose hastily and offered them his seat with evident pleasure.

"But you will have no seat for yourself," responded one of the

young ladies with a smile, hesitating, with true politeness, to accept it.

"Niver mind that," said the gallant Hibernian; "I'd ride upon a cowcatcher to New York any time for a smile from such *jintlemanly ladies*."

And he retired into the next car amid the cheers of his fellow-passengers.

**The two uses** of slang are (1) to escape thought, and (2) to conceal it. (1) One escapes the mental exertion of selecting a fitting expression by using a stereotyped label that takes the place of all expressions. A few years ago the slang adjective was "red-hot." A pleasing entertainment, a becoming ribbon, delicious ice-cream, all were alike "red-hot." It was less wearisome to apply this epithet to all three than to select "pleasing," "becoming," and "delicious" as the suitable adjectives. Hence the use of slang, even more than the interpolation of foreign words (see page 366), indicates a limited vocabulary, and tends to limit it still further.

1884  
daisy  
a fly  
housh  
a good  
situation

As an illustration of the peculiarities of English slang the *New Orleans Times* recalls the anecdote of a young American lady in England who, while playing croquet, exclaimed at a surprisingly fortunate shot of an opposing player: "Oh! what a horrid scratch!" whereupon a young English lady remarked: "You shouldn't use such language; it's slang." "Well, what should I say?" asked Miss America. "Oh! you should say, What a beastly fluke!"

(2) But slang also panders to a moral laziness, that shirks the responsibility of having convictions.

Take for example the tendency in what are fashionable and claim to be refined circles in this country, and perhaps even more especially in England, to the use of vague and indefinite phrases, not so much to hide a deficiency of ideas as to cover discreet reticencies of opinion, or prudent suppressions of natural and sponta-

neous feeling. The practice of employing these empty sounds—they have no claim to be called words—is founded partly in a cautious desire of avoiding embarrassing self-committals, and partly in that vulgar prejudice of polite society which proscribes the expression of decided sentiments of admiration, approval, or dissatisfaction, or of precise and definite opinions upon any subject, as contrary to the laws of good taste, indicative of a want of knowledge of the world, and moreover arrogant and pedantic.—MARSH.

He was showing the man the new bay mule that he was working in a team with the old gray. "You warrant him sound, and perfectly kind and gentle?" the man said. "Perfectly," said Farmer John; "my wife and children drive him, and he is a perfect pet. Comes into the house like a dog." "Easy to shoe?" asked the man. "Well, I guess so; fact is, I never had him shod, I don't believe in it; he works better without it," said Farmer John. "How does he act when you put the crupper on?" asked the man. Farmer John hesitated. "Well, pretty good, I guess," he said; "fact is, I never put it on." "How does it get on?" asked the man; "who does put it on?" "Well, I kind of don't know," said Farmer John; "fact is, he had the harness on when I got him, an' it fit him so well, an' he seemed to be so kine o' contented in it, like, that I sort of never took it off'n him." "And how long have you had him?" asked the man. Farmer John chewed a wheat straw very meditatively. "Well," he said, "not to exoced more'n two year, mebbe." And the man backed a little further away, and said he would "sort of look round a little further before he bought, like." And Farmer John never saw him again, even unto this day.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

*Where is slang permissible?* The answer is easy: Nowhere. A writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* says that all educated people use three different kinds of English: "Old Saxon English when they go to church, or read good poetry; vernacular or colloquial English, not altogether free from slang and vulgarity, when they talk to one another in the ordinary intercourse of life; and literary English when they make speeches or sermons, and write or read articles in reviews or books."

This certainly is not true of all educated people, nor should it be true of any. The language of ordinary intercourse is less formal than that of the essay or the discourse, because the thought is less formal; but with many people there is, and with all educated people there should be, the same effort in both to give the purest as well as the

most exact expression to the thought as it is. So interpenetrated are thought and language, that slang in speech, even in the freest and most familiar intercourse, betokens shabby ideas, inexact thought, and a low literary standard. Stilted and pedantic, speech is never to be; but the easiest, most unassuming, and most delightful language of daily intercourse will be best assured where there is thorough mastery of reputable English, and where no other is heard.

EXERCISE.—Give purity to the following sentences by altering words and expressions:

People talk about the emancipation of the slaves, as if it could be done off-hand. How cheering it is to hear again the voice of a friend, who has for long been separated from us! He does things in a careless, slip-slop manner. In the following year the tables were turned, and the party of the Queen-mother came into power. It was by such obsequious conduct that he curried favor with the leader of his party. He was deserted by his friends for good and all. Those who stick by you and support you in adversity are true friends. Napoleon gained a great lot of battles before his career was finished.

*The underlined words are called slang*

The secretary did not come up to the scratch till the close of the debate, when he more than insinuated that his master had put his foot in it.

Many of them came readily on deck, and being down on their marrow-bones, did not venture to rise till they were positively ordered to do so.

“How do you like my boots, love?” asked a youthful bride. “Oh, they’re immense,” he said.



## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

### **Purity.**

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2. Novel words, p. 354.
  - a.* Wholly new words, p. 354.
    1. New things and new thoughts need new words, p. 354.

#### **TECHNICAL WORDS.**

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1. Words unjustifiably created, p. 372.

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Uses of slang.

1. To escape thought, p. 375.

2. To conceal thought, p. 375.

Where is slang permissible, p. 376.

## CHAPTER XX.

### PROPRIETY.

The opposite to logical truth is properly error ; to moral truth, a lie ; to grammatical truth, a blunder.—**CAMPBELL.**

**II. Authorized Definitions** are probably less known by people who suppose they know them, than any other subject of information. To the majority of men, most words not representing the material necessities of life are mere counters, used and handed about with no apprehension of their meaning. One may be a voluminous reader, and yet know words inadequately. Unless he has formed the habit of looking up the dictionary discussion of unaccustomed words, his definition of them will be based upon the meaning he conjectured from the context to have been their signification in particular passages. When one remembers that all science is based on a few definitions ; that misunderstandings and quarrels and wars have grown out of words meant in one way by the speaker, and understood in another by the hearer, it will seem worth while to be sure one knows the meaning of the words he uses.

Words are an amazing barrier to the reception of truth. . . .

Definition of words has been commonly called a mere exercise of grammarians ; but when we come to consider the innumerable murders, proscriptions, massacres, and tortures which men have inflicted on each other from mistaking the meanings of words, the

exercise of definition certainly begins to assume a more dignified aspect. . . .

If you choose to quarrel with your eldest son, do it; if you are determined to be disgusted with the world, and to go and live in Westmoreland, do so; if you are resolved to quit your country, and settle in America, go!—only, when you have settled the reasons upon which you take one or the other of these steps, have the goodness to examine whether the *words* in which these reasons are contained have any distinct meaning; and if you find they have not, embrace your first-born, forget America, unloose your packages, and remain where you are.—**SYDNEY SMITH.**

A lecturer on natural history was called upon the other day to pay for a live rabbit which he had in a basket in a railway car, and which the conductor said would be charged the same as a dog. The lecturer vainly explained that he was going to use the rabbit in illustration of a lecture he was about to give in another town, and, indignantly taking a small live tortoise from his pocket, said: "You'll be telling me next that this is a dog, and that I must pay for it also." The conductor went for superior orders, and on his return delivered this lecture on natural history: "Cats is dogs, rabbits is dogs, but a tortois is a hinsect." The professor had to pay dog-fare for the rabbit.

**Forming Definitions** of familiar words is in every way an admirable exercise, especially in class or in company, where there is the stimulus of emulation. These may be merely formal, like the following:

The modern book is an assemblage of leaves, of convenient form and dimensions, securely united at one edge, with pages regularly numbered, impressed with characters of different, but fixed forms, according to their several uses, words separated by spaces, members of the periods, and the periods themselves, distinguished by appropriate points, and the whole cut up into paragraphs, sections, and chapters, according to the natural divisions of the subject, or the convenience of the writer, printer, or reader, and, finally, abundantly provided with explanatory notes and references, and ample tables of contents and indexes.—**MARSH.**

But they will be more interesting and more valuable when they reach those intangible ideas that find their definition in one's life experience; that to the boy are abstract ideas, while to the man they overflow with a thousand memories. Of these, the following is an instance:

Sensibility is a constitutional quickness of sympathy with pain and pleasure, and a keen sense of the gratifications that accom-

pany social intercourse, mutual endearments, and reciprocal preferences. — COLERIDGE.

**Propriety** may be violated by using words that for the meaning intended are (a) Inaccurate, or (b) Inappropriate.

(a) **Inaccurate Words** are often called malapropos, a word which recalls Mrs. Malaprop, a character in Sheridan's comedy, "The Rivals."

It was she who wanted her niece to illiterate a lover from her memory, who declared Sir Anthony was an absolute misanthropy, and who discoursed as follows on the education of women :

Observe me, Sir Anthony, I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning. I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman; for instance, I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning; neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments. But, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn her a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts; and as she grew up I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries; but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not mis-spell, and mis-pronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know; and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Presently she remarks that nothing is so conciliating to you young people as severity, prepares her niece to receive Captain Absolute's invocations, and hopes the captain will not consider her wholly illegible. She is glad to get her niece from under her intuition, and assures her maid that unless she is faithful, she will forfeit her mistress's malevolence forever, while her being a simpleton shall be no excuse for her locality. To Captain Absolute she says that his being his father's son is a sufficient accommodation, but from the ingenuity of his appearance she is convinced he deserves the character given of him. Few gentlemen, she sighs, know how to appreciate the ineffectual qualities in a woman, and after pronouncing the captain the very pine-apple of politeness, drops into grammatical phrase as follows :

I am sure I have done everything in my power since I exploded the affair. Long ago I laid my positive conjunctions on her never to think on the fellow again. I have since

laid Sir Anthony's preposition before her; but, I am sorry to say, she seems resolved to decline every particle that I enjoin her. . . . Oh, it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree! I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him; but, behold, this very day I have interceded another letter from the fellow. . . . There, sir, an attack upon my language! What do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! Was ever such a brute! Sure, if I reprehend anything in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs! . . . Then he's so well bred—so full of alacrity, and adulation, and has so much to say for himself—in such good language, too. His physiognomy is so grammatical. Then his presence is so noble! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:

Hesperian curls—the front of Job himself!  
 An eye, like March, to threaten at command!  
 A station, like Harry Mercury, new—

Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly. . . .

Well, Sir Anthony, since you desire it, we will not anticipate the past; so mind, young people, our retrospection will be all to the future. . . .

So? so? Here's fine work!—here's fine suicide, parricide, and stimulation going on in the fields! And Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe! . . . That gentleman can tell you—'twas he enveloped the affair to me . . . but he can tell you the perpendiculars. . . . We should only participate things. . . . Nay, no delusions to the past. Etc.

Similar blunders are found where they could hardly be looked for.

I do not know what character you have for accuracy.—MOORE.

I thus obtained a character for natural powers of reasoning, which I could not refute, and yet which I felt were undeserved.—A. B. EDWARDS.

[An almost incredible series of blunders, but found in her recent novel, "Miss Carew."]

The reciprocal civility of authors is one of the most risible scenes in the farce of life.—DR. JOHNSON.

There are two modes of estimating the relative amount of words derived from different sources in a given language.—MARSH.

Macaulay speaks of the *observation* of the Sabbath.

William Taylor wrote, in 1814: "A moral and political rather than a *beautiful* value." Addison speaks of *apoplectic* balsam. Cowper has *ludicrous* talent. I have read of a *miscellaneous* author. Yet we have *sick rooms* and *dying beds*, *insane* asylums, *mad* houses.—HALL.

See use of *personality*, p. 47.

**Classical Words.**—It will be noticed that Mrs. Malaprop's blunders are mostly in the use of words derived from the Latin. For this as well as for other reasons preference should be given to the shorter words of Anglo-Saxon origin, where the root is not lost in the mazes of a voluminous tail. However certain a writer may be that his use of English is correct, he cannot be sure that his hearers will apprehend it correctly. Every blunder in speech represents a score of blunders in hearing. The little girl that, after singing Sunday after Sunday,

The consecrated cross I'll bear  
Till death shall set me free,

inquired with languid curiosity what kind of a bear a consecrated cross-eyed bear was, anyway, has many unconscious fellow-sufferers, even in intelligent congregations.

Mrs. A. : "Now, Mrs. B., will you come and see our apiary?"  
Mrs. B. (who has been putting it off all the afternoon) : "Well, Mrs. A., the thing is, you know, I'm—I'm rather afraid of monkeys!"

Gent to the waiter : "Bring me some grammatical and typographical errors." Waiter (looking puzzled at first, but recovering in a moment his usual serenity) : "We are just out of them, sir." "Then what do you mean by keeping them on your bill of fare?"

"Are you the judge of reprobates?" said the Boston *Post's* Mrs. Partington, as she walked into an office of a Judge of Probate. "I am a Judge of Probate," was the reply. "Well, that's it, I expect," quoth the old lady. "You see, my father died detested, and he left several little infidels, and I want to be their executioner!"

A gentleman, wishing to be undisturbed one day, instructed his Irish servant to admit no one, and, if any one should inquire for him, to give him an "equivocal answer." Night came, and the gentleman proceeded to interrogate Pat as to his callers. "Did any one call?" "Yis, sur, wan gentleman." "What did he say?" "He axed was yer honor in?" "Well, what did you

tell him?" "Sure, I gave him a quivikle answer jist." "How was that?" "I axed him was his grandmother a monkey!"

Further, it is a certain fact that when we are much accustomed to particular terms, we can scarcely avoid fancying that we understand them, whether they have a meaning or not.—CAMPBELL.

Mankind in general are so little in the habit of looking steadily at their own meaning, or of weighing the words by which they express it, that the writer who is careful to do both will sometimes mislead his readers through the very excellence which qualifies him to be their instructor; and this with no other fault on his part than the modest mistake of supposing in those to whom he addresses himself an intellect as watchful as his own.—COLERIDGE.

**Short Words are Best.**—While it should be the writer's first effort to express his meaning as exactly as possible, and while this will often require all the resources of his vocabulary, alike of Anglo-Saxon and of classical origin, yet where there is a choice between the crisp, vigorous, unmistakable Saxon, and the ornate, sonorous Latin, choice should fall upon the former, as not only in better taste, but as comparatively free from liability to misapprehension.

You will often find that a sentence, every word of which may be authorized English, has a sickly haze hanging over it, as you imagine your utterance of it to your hearers, which is entirely due to its Latin vocabulary. It becomes transparent the instant you strike out Norman words from the points of emphasis, and put Saxon words in their places.—PHELPS.

Valuable as the Latin adjuncts to our language are, in the appreciation of their value it should never be forgotten that they are adjuncts. The frame, the sinews, the nerves, the heart's blood, in brief, the body and soul of our language is English; Latin and Greek furnish only its limbs and outward flourishes.—R. G. WHITE.

**EXERCISE.**—Use simpler words in the following sentences:

Their hearts are like that of the principle of evil himself—incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil.—BURKE.

We may well commend it to the chaplain of a nervine hospital, in which patients congregate who are afflicted with insomnia.—PHELPS.

I would inculcate the importance of a careful study of genuine English, and a conscientious scrupulosity in its accurate use.—MARSH.

There is very little affinity, either in sense or in sound, between *precept* and *doctrine*; and nothing but an oscitancy from which no writer whatever is uniformly excepted, can account for so odd a misapplication of a familiar term.—CAMPBELL.

They agreed to *homologate* the choice that had been made. Some writers confine their attention to *minutiæ* of style. His *dismission* of office caused a great sensation. If we wish to improve our taste, we must become *versant* with the best classical writers. *Ceteris paribus*, when a Saxon and a Latin word offer themselves, we should choose the Saxon. The *amende honorable* having been made, a hostile meeting was prevented. The subject will be treated *ad longum* in the next edition of the work. The production was a *chef-d'œuvre* of ingenuity. They entered into the concern with great *gusto*. He was evidently laboring under some *hallucination*. My friend has a great *knack* at remarks. Our *cicerone* first conducted us through the principal buildings of the city. The *mania* for French fashion still prevails. It was not considered quite *comme il faut* for us to appear. The *animus* that pervaded the address was manifest throughout. As the company retired, a ludicrous *contretemps* took place.

"**Johnsonese**" is a term frequently applied to writing that abounds in words of Latin derivation, so called from Dr. Samuel Johnson, its great exponent.

It is clear that Johnson himself did not think in the dialect in which he wrote. The expressions which came first to his tongue were simple, energetic, and picturesque. When he wrote for publication, he did his sentences out of English into Johnsonese. His letters from the Hebrides to Mrs. Thrale are the original of that work of which the "Journey to the Hebrides" is the translation, and



it is amusing to compare the two versions. "When we were taken up-stairs," says he in one of his letters, "a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed on which one of us was to lie." This incident is recorded in the "Journey" as follows: "Out of one of the beds on which we were to repose, started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge." Sometimes Johnson translated aloud. "'The Rehearsal,' he said, very unjustly, 'has not wit enough to keep it sweet;' then, after a pause, 'it has not vitality enough to keep it from putrefaction.'"—MACAULAY.

In a note on

Sluttry to such neat excellence opposed  
Should make desire vomit from emptiness:

which Johnson explains, "fed the convulsions of eructation without plenitude."—HUDSON.

Dr. Parr seems to think that eloquence consists not in an abundance of beautiful images—not in simple and sublime conceptions—not in the feelings of the passions; but in a studious arrangement of *sonorous, exotic, and sesquipedal* words; a very ancient error, which corrupts the style of the young, and wearies the patience of sensible men.—SYDNEY SMITH.

Junius did much to limit, Cobbett something to overthrow, the influence of the stilted Latinism of Johnson and his school, and to bring back the language, if not to a Saxon vocabulary, at least to an idiomatic grammatic structure.—MARSH.

**Modern taste** shows a marked preference for short words. Marsh gives a table of percentages to show that the best writers of the present day habitually employ in both prose and poetry a larger proportion of Anglo-Saxon words than the best writers of the last century.

Think not that strength lies in the big round word;  
Or that the brief and plain must needs be weak.  
To whom can this be true who once has heard  
The cry for help, the tongue that all men speak  
When want, or woe, or fear, is in the throat,  
So that each word gasped out is like a shriek  
Pressed from the sore heart, or a strange wild note  
Sung by some fay or fiend? There is a strength  
Which dies if stretched too far or spun too fine:  
Which has more weight than breadth, more depth than length.

Let but this force be mine, of thought and speech,  
 And he that will may take the sleek fat phrase  
 Which glows and burns not, though it gleam and shine;  
 Light but no heat; a flash without a blaze!  
 Nor is it mere strength that the short word boasts.  
 It serves of more than fight or storm to tell,  
 The roar of waves that clash on rock-bound coasts;  
 The crash of tall trees when the wild winds swell;  
 The roar of guns, the groans of men that die  
 On blood-stained fields. It has a voice as well  
 For them that weep; for them that mourn the dead.  
 For them that laugh, and dance, and clap the hand:  
 To joy's quick step, as well as grief's slow tread.  
 The sweet plain words we learnt at first keep time;  
 And though the theme be sad, or gay, or grand,  
 With such, with all, these may be made to chime  
 In thought, or speech, or song, or prose, or rhyme.

J. ADDISON ALEXANDER.

The English of our Bible is good. Now and then some long words are found, and they always hurt the verses in which you find them.

Take that which says, "O ye generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

There is one long word which ought not to be in, namely, "generation." In the old version the old word "brood" is used. Read the verse again with this term, and you feel its full force: "O ye viper's brood, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

Crime sometimes does not look like crime, when it is set before us in many folds of a long word. When a man steals and we call it "defalcation," we are at a loss to know if it is a blunder or a crime.

If he does not tell the truth, and we are told that it is a case of "prevarication," it takes us some time to know just what we should think of it.

No man will ever cheat himself into wrong-doing, nor will he be at a loss to judge of others, if he thinks and speaks of acts in clear, crisp terms.

It is a good rule, if one is at a loss to know if an act is right or wrong, to write it down in short, straight-out English.—HORATIO SEYMOUR.

*Examples.*—There is only one principle of public conduct—  
*Do what you think right, and take place and power as an accident.*

Upon any other plan, office is shabbiness, labor, and sorrow.—**SYDNEY SMITH.**

Here is a Chinese version of the parable of the Prodigal Son, which was read at a festival of the Chinese Sunday-schools in New York :

A man, he two sons. Son speak he to father ; father he got money ; give some he ; father he take it all right. I just now give you half. He give him half ; he go long way—like me come China to New York.

No be careful of money, use too much money, all gone ; he very hungry. He go to man. He want work, he say, all right ; he tell him feed pigs. He give pigs beans ; he eat with pigs himself.

He just now talk, " My father he rich man—too much money. What for me stay here hungry ? I want to go back and see my father. I say to him, I very bad. He knows I bad. Emperor (God) see I bad. No be son, may be coolie."

He go back ; long way, father see him. He take him on the neck. The son say, " I very bad. I just now no be your son ; I coolie."

His father talkey to boy, and say, " Get handsome coat ; give he ring, give he shoes ; bring fat cow—kill him, give him to eat."

They very glad. He all same dead, just come back alive ; he lost ; he get back.

Number one son come. He hear music ; he tell servant. " What for they make music ?"

He say, " Your brother come back ; your father very glad he no sick ; he kill fat cow."

Number one son very angry ; he no go inside ; very angry. Father he come out ; he say, " No be angry."

Number one son he say, " I stay all time by father ; never make him angry. My father never kill one fat cow for me. My brother he be very bad ; he use money too much ; he have fat cow and music."

Father say, " You no see ; he just dead, he now come to life ; he lost, he now come back." They make music.

**(b) Inappropriate Words** may convey the meaning unmistakably, but are not in accordance with the English idiom.

A Frenchman, while looking at a number of vessels, exclaimed, " See what a flock of ships !" He was told that a flock of ships was called a fleet, but that a fleet of sheep was called a flock. To assist him in mastering the intricacies of the English language, he was told that a flock of girls was called a bevy, that a bevy of wolves is called a pack, but that a pack of cards is never called a bevy, though a pack of thieves is called a gang, and a gang of angels is called a host, while a host of porpoises is termed a shoal. He was told that a host of oxen is termed a herd, and a herd of

children is called a troop, and a troop of partridges is termed a covey, and a covey of beauty is called a galaxy, and a galaxy of ruffians is called a horde, and a horde of rubbish is called a heap, and a heap of bullocks is called a drove, and a drove of blackguards is called a mob, and a mob of whales is called a school, and a school of worship is called a congregation, and a congregation of engineers is called a corps, and a corps of robbers is called a band, and a band of locusts is called a crowd, and a crowd of gentlefolks is called the *élite*. The last word being French, the scholar understood it and asked no more. (Compare page li.)

**III. Grammatical Construction** should have been learned in previous text-books, and we can allude here only to those errors so frequent that they need especial avoidance. A violation of propriety of this kind is called a solecism.

(a.) **In Gender.**—A common and deplorable affectation in speech has been thus ridiculed :

“So you have finished your studies at the seminary? I was much pleased with the closing exercises. The author of that poem—Miss Wait, I think you called her—bids fair to become known as a poet.”

“We think the authoress will become celebrated as a poetess,” remarked the young lady pertly, with a marked emphasis on two words of the sentence.

“Oh!—ah!” replied the old gentleman, looking thoughtfully over his spectacles at the young lady. “I hear her sister was quite an actress, and under Miss Hosmer’s instructions will undoubtedly become quite a sculptress.”

The young lady appeared irritated.

“The seminary,” continued the old gentleman, with imperturbable gravity, “is fortunate in having an efficient board of managers. From the presidentess down to the humblest teacheress, unusual talent is shown. There is Miss Harper, who, as a chemistress, is unequalled, and Mrs. Knowles has already a reputation as an astronomeress. And in the department of music few can equal Miss Kellogg as a singeress.”

The young lady did not appear to like the chair she was sitting on. She took the sofa at the other end of the room.

"Yes," continued the old gentleman, as if talking to himself, "those White Sisters are very talented. Mary, I understand, has turned her attention to painting and the drama, and will surely become famous as a painteress and even as a lecturers."

A loud slamming of the door caused the old gentleman to look up: the criticeess and grammariansness was gone.

Perhaps it was one of her fellow-studentesses who replied, when asked the gender of "academy," that she supposed that depended upon whether it was a male or a female academy.

The following, from the appendix to Mark Twain's "The Tramp Abroad," illustrates some of the difficulties of the German language which English students escape:

It is a bleak day. Hear the rain, how he pours, and the hail, how he rattles; and see the snow, how he drifts along; and oh, the mud, how deep he is! Ah! the poor fishwife, it is stuck fast in the mire; it has dropped its basket of fishes; and its hands have been cut by the scales as it seized some of the falling creatures, and one scale has even got into its eye, and it cannot get her out. It opens her mouth to cry for help; but if any sound comes out of him, alas, he is drowned by the raging of the storm! And now a tom-cat has got one of the fishes, and she will surely escape with him. No; she bites off a fin, she holds it in her mouth—she will swallow her? No; the fishwife's brave mother-dog deserts his puppies and rescues the fin, when he eats himself as his reward! Oh, horror, the lightning has struck the fish-basket! He sets him on fire. See the flame, how she licks the doomed utensil with her angry tongue! Now she attacks the fishwife's foot—she burns him up, all but the big toe, and even she is partly consumed; and still she spreads, still she waves her fiery tongues! She attacks the fishwife's leg and destroys it; she attacks its poor worn garment and destroys her also; she attacks its body and consumes him; she wreathes herself about its heart and it is consumed; next about its breast, and in a moment she is a cinder; now she

reaches its neck—he goes ; now its chin—it goes ; now its nose—she goes. In another moment, except help come, the fishwife will be no more ! Time presses—is there none to succor or save ? Yes ! Joy, joy ! With flying feet the she-Englishwoman comes ! But, alas, the generous she-female is too late ! Where now is the fated fishwife ? It has ceased from its suffering ; it has gone to a better land ; all that is left of it for its loved ones to lament over is this poor smouldering ash-heap. Ah, woful, woful ash-heap ! Let us take him up tenderly, reverently, upon the lowly shovel, and bear him to his long rest, with the prayer that when he rises again it will be in a realm where he will have one good square responsible sex, and have it all to himself, instead of having a mangy lot of assorted sexes scattered all over him in spots.

(b) **In Case** the commonest errors are shown in the following instances :

He was by nature less ready than her.—TROLLOPE.

As mad as them.—BOLINGBROKE.

I esteem you more than [I do] they.

I esteem you more than them [do].

Do you believe your affirming they are not married will bring both him and I to give up the lady ?—VANBRUGH.

Why should I be told to serve Him, if I do not know whom it is I serve ?—FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

You can keep this letter and show it to whoever you like.—H. T. BUCKLE.

These men, no matter *who* spoke or whom was addressed.—DICKENS.

And now my classmates ; ye remaining few  
That number not the half of those we knew,  
Ye against whose familiar names not yet  
The fatal asterisk of death is set,  
Ye I salute.—LONGFELLOW.

Thackeray, having been requested to write in a lady's album, found on scanning its contents the subjoined lines :

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains—  
They crowned him long ago ;  
But *who* they got to put it on  
Nobody seems to know.—ALBERT SMITH.

Under these Thackeray speedily wrote the following :

I know that Albert wrote in a hurry ;  
 To criticise I scarce presume ;  
 But yet methinks that Lindley Murray  
 Instead of *who* had written *whom*.—W. M. THACKERAY.

An Amherst professor knocked at the door of a room where students were carousing late at night. "Who is there?" asked one of the students. "It is me." "Well, who is 'me'?" "Professor —." "Oh, go away! you can't fool us that way: Professor — would say 'It is I!'" And Professor — went away.

(c) **In Number**, Rushton's rules cannot be bettered :

1. When the two or more nouns in the singular mean different things, or represent distinct ideas, put the verb in the plural.
2. But when the two nouns mean the same thing, or very nearly the same, strike out one of them, put the verb in the singular, and learn to avoid using two words where one is enough.

Thus the following sentences should be corrected :

The reference and construction of the concluding words in the next quotation is very indefinite.—CAMPBELL.

And it will in general be found that the use and signification of the interjections employed in any language furnishes a tolerable key to the character of the people who speak it.—MARSH.

Nevertheless a clear objective conception and comprehension of the general principles of syntax is very desirable.—MARSH.

The zeal of the seraphim breaks forth in a becoming warmth of sentiments and expressions, as the character which is given us of him denotes that generous scorn and intrepidity which attends heroic virtue.—*Spectator*.

Personal refinement, extending to finish, care, and precision, and a certain deliberation and thought in relation to the details of the manner of living, gives a personal dignity which is absent in the usual rush and tear of modern life. Mr. Ruskin expatiates somewhere on the vulgarity of being in a hurry, and assuredly nothing that is worth doing is the better done for being unaccompanied by the personal dignity which results from such refinement of habit.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

A common blunder is to put a plural verb after a singular subject, through the misleading influence of attributes of the subject intervening. Thus :

A great part of the differences with respect to the language of the educated classes in the United States and in England grow out of the different circumstances and employments of the people of the two countries.— *Worcester's Dictionary*.

Find an illustration on page 79.

As to expressions like "Five dollars was paid," or "Five dollars were paid," usage is divided. The general rule is of course that the verb is to be singular or to be plural according as the subject is in idea (not necessarily in form) singular or plural. But in the application of this rule some writers seem to have as indistinct ideas of what the plural number is as the young lady had who gave for the plural of "forget-me-not"—"forget-us-not," and who "mentioned six animals of the polar regions" by naming "three polar bears, and three seals."

Thus, Worcester's Dictionary says on page 1 :

A considerable number of these provincialisms are to be found, etc.

While two pages later we find :

There is a considerable number of words.

The New York *Tribune* lately has obstinately adhered to the opinion that sentences like the following should have their verbs in the singular number : "The usual number of applicants for admission to the freshman class was examined in June." And here is the London *Academy* sanctioning the same silly notion : "An innumerable multitude of small errors disfigures his pages." These editors will tell us that "number" and "multitude" being collective nouns but singular as regards form should be followed by singular verbs. But any Second-Reader scholar could tell them that the real subjects of the sentences are "applicants" and "errors," both plural nouns. If we say a "number of applicants was," etc., we must also say "a pair of birds is singing to each other," "a couple of deaths was reported," and "a score of persons is to take



part in the services." It need not be difficult to determine what is the apparent and what the real subject of a verb if one will trust common-sense.—*N. C. Advocate*.

It is probable that not one in ten of the English plays written before the time of Shakspeare have escaped destruction.—*R. G. WHITE*.

As any of these three qualifications are most conspicuous and prevailing.—*ADDISON*.

Ignorance or dulness have, indeed, no power of affording delight; but they never give disgust, except when they assume the dignity of knowledge, or ape the sprightliness of wit.—*Rambler*.

I doubt if more than one of these deserve acceptance.—*HALL*.

To connect both a singular and a plural verb with the same subject is usually inexcusable.

We must still dread that extraordinary facility to which human nature is so prone, as sometimes to laugh at what at another time they would shed tears.—*COLERIDGE*.

Pleasure, or pain, which seizes us unprepared and by surprise, have a double force, and are both more capable of subduing the mind, than when they come upon us looking for them, and prepared to receive them.—*FIELDING*.

Constructions should be avoided that use the same word first collectively and then distributively; as, The Legislature, who were incorruptible men, was above influence.

**You was** is among the most offensive of solecisms.

In conversation you will perhaps ten times oftener hear people say, "There's the books you wanted," than "These are the books—;" and "You was present," when a single person is addressed, than "You were present." Yet good use is always considered as declaring solely for the last mode of expression in both cases.—*CAMPBELL*.

In writings of the last century, "you was" is occasionally met with.

You was pushed to the utmost by your creditors.—*BLAIR*, ii. 108.

When you was most in earnest.—*Id.*, ii. 133.

Sir, was you ever in Muscovy?—*VANBRUGH*.

**Impersonal Verbs.**—When a verb is used impersonally it ought undoubtedly to be in the singular number, whether the neuter pronoun be expressed or understood, and when no nominative in the sentence can be regularly construed with the verb, it ought to be considered as impersonal. For this reason analogy as well as usage favor this mode of expression, “The conditions of the agreement were *as follows*,” and not *as follow*.—CAMPBELL.

(*d*) **In Mood**, the principal danger is the neglect of the subjunctive. There are those who would do away with this distinction of thought, but it cannot be spared by those who would be masters of exact expression.

You are speaking to me of a man of whom I am personally ignorant, and I say: “If he is such a man as you represent him, he will do thus and so.” As I do not know the man, there must be in my statement some degree of contingency—which is expressed by “if.” But by coupling “if” with the declarative [indicative], I imply my willingness to accept your testimony concerning the man. My thought, fully expressed, is: “If (I, myself, know nothing about him), but if he *is* (as, on your testimony, I am willing to admit) such a man as you represent him, he will do thus and so.” To say: “If he *be* such a man as you represent him,” would imply that I doubted either your veracity or your judgment. My thought, expanded, would be, “If he *be* such a man as you represent him (and on that point, notwithstanding your testimony, I have no opinion to express) he will do thus and so.”

The tendency to obliterate the distinction that has been indicated, is very strong at the present day; but it ought to be preserved, and must—in order to the intelligent study of English literature—be understood.—GILMORE.

The subjunctive form is, however, to be avoided except where the condition is assumed to be doubtful. Thus:

Surely it would be desirable that some person who knew Sir Walter . . . should be charged with this article.—MACAULAY.

It *would be* a good thing, but it *is* desirable.

If ever man's humor were [was] useful to instruct as well as delight, it was that of Michael Angelo Titmarsh.—G. B. SMITH.

It would doubtless have exhibited itself quietly enough if it were [had been] absolutely meditated.—JUSTIN MCCARTHY.

(e) **In Tense**, a common fault is the use of the past for the perfect; as,

Of antiquated or obsolete words, none will be inserted but such as are to be found in authors who wrote since the accession of Elizabeth, from which we date the golden age of our language.—JOHNSON.

Find the past used for the pluperfect on page 49.

Or in the use of the perfect for the past; as,

In yesterday's paper we have shown.—ADDISON.

Another, not unfrequently an affectation on the part of young writers who esteem an expression elegant in proportion to the number of syllables it contains, is the use of the perfect infinitive for the present.

The compound past infinitive also, formerly very frequent, is almost disused. Lord Berners says: should have aided *to have destroyed*, had made haste *to have entered*, and the like, and this was common in colloquial usage until a very recent period. In cases of this sort, where the relations of time are clearly expressed by the first auxiliary, it is evident that nothing is gained by employing a second auxiliary to fix more precisely the category of the infinitive, but where the simple inflected past tense precedes the infinitive, there is sometimes ground for the employment of an auxiliary with the latter. *I intended to go*, and *I intended to have gone*, do not necessarily express the same thing, but the latter form is not likely long to resist the present inclination to make the infinitive strictly aoristic, and such forms as *I had intended to go* will supersede the past tense of the latter mood.—MARSH.

Campbell thus illustrates the distinction:

"I commanded him not to do it, and he ought not to have done it."

So one may say, "I should have liked to read the story you had, but I should like to have read through every page of Webster's Dictionary."

If the traveller is in haste, and wants rather to have seen the country and the people than to see them, let him take the diligence.—JOHN LABOUCHE.

It was the elder Sheridan, was it not, who asked his son with disgust why he insisted upon going down into a coal mine? "To say I have been there," replied the junior. "Then why the dickens don't you say you have been there, and save the soot?"

There are many that would like to have descended a coal-shaft, who would not have liked to descend.

Correct the following sentences :

I intended to have insisted on this sympathy at greater length.—RUSKIN.

I had hoped never to have seen the statues again when I missed them on the bridge.—MACAULAY.

When I inserted the stripes and curves, her delight was such that I greatly feared she would have *embraced* me.—C. W. DILKE.

Universal truths, or permanent arrangements, are expressed in the present tense ; as, He testified that in that country the snow is red.

The chief occasion of mistake on this point is when a universal truth is stated as maintained or denied by some one in the past, *e.g.*, "He denied that electricity and magnetism *were* (are) the same agents."—HODGSON.

The proprietor of a summer resort, who kept in the newspapers a standing advertisement, headed, "There are no mosquitoes at this hotel!" defended himself, when swarms of them were pointed out, by declaring that the card was written in the spring, when there wasn't a mosquito to be seen.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### **Propriety.**

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Propriety violated by using.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### PRECISION.

The calling two or more different *things* by one and the same name (*ague vocare*) [hence *equivocation*] is the source of almost all error in human discourse. He who wishes to throw dust in the eyes of an opponent, to hinder his arriving at the real facts of a case, will often have recourse to this artifice, and thus to *equivocate*, and *equivocation* have attained their present secondary meaning.—**TRENCH.**

**Precision** requires the exact expression of the thought to be conveyed. It demands attention (1) to the Words employed, and (2) to the Construction, that in stating the thought the sentence may tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

(1) **Words** may lack precision (*a*) through the confounding of synonyms, (*b*) through the use of Equivocal Words, or (*c*) of General Words.

(*a*) **Synonyms** are by etymology words that have precisely the same signification. The English language has very few such, *begin* and *commence* being perhaps as near approximations as can be found. But the term is extended to include words that have very nearly the same meaning, but express shades of difference in signification.

To form an idea of the extent to which our language has been desynonymized, one has only to compare together our words derived mediately or immediately from the Latin, and those which they at first represented. Of these pairs there are hundreds upon hundreds; and yet of not a single pair are the members strictly identical in import. Take for example *acid* and *sour*, *cordial* and

*heartly, crime and guilt, divine and godlike, juvenile and youthful, lucid and bright, miserable and unhappy, ponderous and weighty, portion and share, quantity and deal, sufficient and enough.* Where, moreover, two words, one of which is a material corruption of the other, are taken from a foreign source, we find them very far from being synonyms. *Cure and care, engine and gin, paralysis and palsy, penitence and penance, phantasy and fancy, piety and pity,* are instances in point.—HALL.

How important these fine distinctions are is shown on almost every page of standard authors. Take the following instances from Coleridge :

—'s face is almost the only exception I know to the observation that something feminine—not *effeminate*, mind, is discoverable in the countenances of all men of genius.—*Works*, vi. 384.

Dr. Hennage said to Luther, "Sir, when you say that the Holy Spirit is the certainty in the word towards God, that is, that a man is certain of his own mind and opinion ; then it must needs follow that all sects have the Holy Ghost, for they will needs be most certain of their doctrine and religion."—*Luther's Table Talk*.

Luther might have answered, "Positive, you mean, not certain."—v. 278.

I am by the law of my nature a reasoner. A person who should suppose I meant by that word an arguer would not only not understand me, but would understand the contrary of my meaning. I can take no interest whatever in hearing or saying anything merely as a fact—merely as having happened. It must refer to something within me before I can regard it with any curiosity or care. My mind is always energetic—I don't mean energetic ; I require in everything what for lack of another word I may call *propriety*—that is, a reason why the thing *is* at all, and why it is *there* or *then* rather than elsewhere or at another time.—vi. 503.

While Purity demands that a word be in itself good English, and Propriety demands that it be used in one of the significations belonging to it, Precision still further demands that this signification exactly express the thought to be conveyed. Faults in Purity and in Propriety can be discerned and pronounced upon by the reader. Faults

in Precision must often be left to the detection of the writer himself, who should know better than another exactly what he wants to express.

**An extensive vocabulary** is one of the requisites to precision (see pages xxvi, 347). Only by letting all the words allied in meaning pass in review before the mind, can one be certain that the exact word has been selected.

For this purpose there is one aid so far superior to all others that its use should be understood even by young writers. This is Roget's "Thesaurus of English Words."

To illustrate its comprehensiveness and the manner of its use, suppose the thought in my mind is, "Miss Abbott's dress looks genteel," but that I have just learned this adjective is no longer used in a commendatory sense (see page 373), and that I wish to replace it by a synonym.

Turning in the index to the word "genteel," I find the numbers "852, 875," indicating the paragraphs that include this word. Turning to 852, I find this list :

*Fashion, style, mode, vogue.*

*Manners, breeding, politeness, good behavior, gentility, decorum, punctilio, form, formality, etiquette, custom, demeanor, air, port, carriage, presence.*

*Show, equipage, etc., see 882.*

*The world, the fashionable world, high life, town, court, gentility, civilization, civilized life, see Nobility, 875.*

*Verbs.*—To be fashionable, etc.

*Adjectives.*—Fashionable, in fashion, in vogue, modish, stylish, courtly, genteel, well-bred, well-behaved, polished, gentlemanly, lady-like, well-spoken, civil, presentable, refined, thorough-bred, unembarrassed.

*Adverbs.*—Fashionably, in fashion, etc.

None of these words quite replace my "genteel," so I turn to 875. Here I find :

*Nobility, noblesse, aristocracy, peerage, gentry, gentility, quality, rank, blood, birth, fashionable world, etc. 852, distinction, etc.*

*A personage, man of distinction, rank, etc.; a nobleman, lord, peer, grandee, don, gentleman, squire, patrician, lordling.*

*Prince, duke, marquis, earl, viscount, baron, baronet, knight, count, esquire, etc., see 745.*

*Verbs.*—To be noble, etc.

*Adjectives.*—Noble, exalted, princely, of rank, titled, patrician, aristocratic, high-born, well-born, genteel, gentlemanly, fashionable, etc., 852.



No word here quite meets the want, so I turn to the cross references. Under 882 I find :

Ostentation, display, show, flourish, parade, pomp, state, solemnity, pageantry, dash, glitter, strut, magnificence, pomposity, pretensions, showing off.

Pageant, spectacle, procession, turn out, gala, regatta.

Ceremony, ceremonial, mummary, solemn mockery ; formality, form, etiquette, punctilio, punctiliousness, frippery, court dress, etc.

*Verbs.*—To be ostentatious, etc. ; to display, exhibit, show off, come forward, put one's self forward, flaunt, emblazon, glitter ; make or cut a figure, dash, to figure.

To observe or stand on ceremony, etiquette, etc.

*Adjectives.*—Ostentatious, showy, gaudy, garish, dashing, flaunting, glittering, pompous, sumptuous, theatrical.

Pompous, solemn, stately, high-sounding, formal, stiff, ceremonious, punctilious.

Still I am unsatisfied, so I turn to 745. This I find to be, as I might have expected, a list of titles, useless for this search.

Under 852 the words given remind me of "natty," a favorite with Thackeray. That will hardly answer my purpose, as it implies an attempt at effect, like "spruce." I look in the index for "natty," but do not find it, so I turn to the allied adjective "spruce." This has in the index two references : "neat, 652 ; beautiful, 845." I find that the words under 652 have reference only to the condition of an article, without reference to its material or form ; so none of them will answer. Under 845 I find these adjectives :

Beautiful, handsome, fine, pretty, lovely, graceful, elegant, delicate, refined, fair, comely, seemly, well-favored, proper, shapely, well-made, well-formed, well-proportioned, symmetrical, becoming, goodly, neat, spruce, sleek, bright-eyed, attractive, curious.

Blooming, brilliant, shining, beaming, resplendent, dazzling, gorgeous, superb, magnificent, sublime.

Picturesque, art-tical.

Passable, not amiss, undeformed, undefaced, spotless, unspotted.

Of these words "elegant" is so much nearer my meaning than the others that I look for it in the index. I find that besides the list just quoted, it is found under "tasteful, 850 ; style, 578." Turning first to the latter, I have :

Elegance, grace, ease, nature, concinnity, readiness, euphony.

*Adjectives.*—Elegant, polished, classical, Attic, Ciceronian, graceful, easy, natural, unlabored, chaste, pure, flowing, mellifluous, euphontous, rhythmical.

These do not help me, so I turn to 850. The adjectives here are :

In good taste, tasty (tasteful), unaffected, pure, chaste, classical, refined, elegant, methetic.

I am beginning to think I shall be obliged to use "elegant," but first I look up the words allied to two or three others of the adjectives already found that seem nearest to what I want.

Under "superb" I find in the index only 845, the list already quoted. Under "well-bred" I find a reference to "courteous, 804;" under "fashionable," to "customary, 613;" and I look up half a dozen others, only to find that all hopeful lists have been already quoted. Had the adjective been wanted to express a judgment less positive, I might have been helped by the fact that besides each of the lists of words quoted was found on each page a list of the words of contrary meaning. Thus, adjoining the last list, 850, we have these adjectives:

In bad taste, vulgar, coarse, unrefined, gross, heavy, rude, unpolished, homespun, homebred, uncouth, awkward, ungraceful, slovenly, slatternly, impolite, ill-mannered, uncivil, ungentlemanly, unladylike, unfeminine, unseemly, unrepresentable, unkempt, uncombed.

Rustic, boorish, clownish, barbarous, barbaric, Gothic, unclassical, heathenish, outlandish, untamed, 876.

Obsolete, out of fashion, unfashionable, antiquated, old-fashioned, gone by.

New-fangled, odd, fantastic, grotesque, *see* ridiculous, 832, serio-comic, tragi-comic, affected, meretricious, extravagant, monstrous, shocking, horrid, revolting.

Gaudy, tawdry, bedizened, tricked out.

But in this case a negative form like "not ungraceful" will not express my thought, so I am forced to choose among the words before me. On the whole, if I must employ a single word, I decide that "elegant" will most nearly express my meaning; so I write, "Miss Abbott's dress looks elegant." It is not quite what I want to say, but it is as near to my thought as the English language permits me to get. (See page 347.)

So important is practice in finding and considering synonyms, that we give a number of exercises in which the pupil is to replace the words in italics by others that express the meaning as well or better.

*Example.*—The two armies stood in order of battle.

The two armies stood in *array* of battle. Courage is an *admirable* quality. The demand is steadily *increasing*. Plants *need* food as well as animals. Some years since I *formed* the *project* of writing a history. The flies that I had *observed* were all distinguished

from each other in *shape* and color. Plants are the *habitations* of insects. The victory was *announced* by a *peal* of cannon. The *reflection* of the moon is seen in the *placid* lake. They traversed the *lofty* mountains that *surround* like a *rampart* the beautiful region of Cashmere. The majority of mankind *earn* their livelihood by *hard work*. The soldier obeyed the *command* of his officer with *alacrity*. When the evening *mist* *enveloped* the plain, a *troop* of wild ducks suddenly *settled* on the surface of the water. The *confusion* was at length *succeeded* by *profound* silence. Birds *predict* the *changes* of weather. Sea birds have places of *rendezvous*, where they *seem* to *deliberate* on the *affairs* of the republic. How is this city, once so *full of people*, now so *solitary*? He *attained* a *high position* by *industry* and *perseverance*. Books *afford* many resources in *solitude*. It can be *demonstrated* that the earth is *round*. The action became general soon after it *began*. *Manual* labor was *designed* as a *blessing*. The sea-coast *displays* a magnificent *prospect*. The army was *animated* by the spirit of its commander. Man is the slave of *habit*. The sailor *encounters* many *perils*. The citizens, under their *gallant* governor, made an *admirable* *defence*. The king *peremptorily* refused the *request*. The water belonging to our *globe* exists in various *states*. History is a *record* of public *events*. Charlemagne *founded* various *seminaries* of public instruction. Some *ingenious* experiments were made.

*Mungo Park*.—While Mr. Park was waiting on the banks of the Niger for a passage, the king of the country was *informed* that a white man *intended* to visit him. On this *intelligence*, a messenger was instantly *despatched* to tell the stranger that his majesty could not possibly admit him to his presence till he *understood* the cause of his arrival; and also to *warn* him not to cross the river without the *royal permission*. The *message* was accordingly *delivered* by one of the *chief* natives, who advised Mr. Park to seek a lodging in an *adjacent* village, and *promised* to give him some *requisite instructions* in the morning. Mr. Park immediately complied with this *counsel*; but on entering the village, he had the *mortification* to find every door closed against him. He was, therefore, obliged to remain all the day without *food* beneath the *shade* of a tree. About sunset, as he was turning his horse loose to graze, and expected to *pass* the night in this *lonely situation*, a woman returning from her

*employment* in the fields stopped to *gaze* at him ; and *observing* his *dejected* looks, inquired from what *cause* they proceeded. Mr. Park endeavored, as well as he could, to make known his *destitute* situation. The woman immediately took up his saddle and bridle, and *desired* him to follow her to her *residence*, where, after lighting a lamp, she presented him with some boiled fish, spread a mat for him to lie upon, and gave him *permission* to *continue* under her roof till morning. Having performed this *beneficent* action, she *summoned* her female companions to their spinning, which *occupied* the chief part of the night, while their labor was *beguiled* by a variety of songs.

*Gustavus Vasa*.—This hero, who *rescued* his country from a *foreign yoke*, was *allied* to the royal family of Sweden. On the invasion of that country by Christiern II. in 1518, Gustavus Vasa was one of the six *hostages* whom he took to Denmark, and failing in *detaching* him from his *allegiance* to his country, he gave an order for his death ; but afterward changed it to *imprisonment* in the castle of Copenhagen. Eric Banner, a Danish nobleman, feeling *compassion* for the sufferings of the young Swede, *obtained* leave to take him to a *fortress* in Jutland, of which he was the governor. Here Gustavus passed his time in comparative *satisfaction*, until he heard of the *accession* of Christiern II. to the Swedish crown, when his heart burned within him, and he was resolved to use every *effort* to *recover* the lost liberties of his country. He escaped to Lubec, but soon found that the Danes were in *quest* of him, which obliged him to assume the *habit* and manners of a peasant. In this *disguise* he passed through all quarters of their army, in a wagon loaded with hay, until he reached an old family castle at Sudermania. He *despatched* letters hence to his friends, hoping to *rouse* them to an attempt for the recovery of their *liberty* ; but meeting with little *success* among the great, he next tried the peasantry. He visited their villages by night, *harangued* them at their festive *assemblies*, but without *effect*, as they *uniformly* told him it was in vain for them to attempt to *better* their condition, for "peasants they were, and peasants they must remain." Gustavus next determined to try the miners of Dalecarlia. He penetrated the mountains of that *remote* province, and was obliged for a *scanty subsistence* to enter himself as a com-

mon laborer at a mine. Here he worked within the *dark caverns* of the earth ; but the *fineness* of his linen soon led some of his fellow-laborers to *suspect* that he was more than what he seemed. By the *advice* of a friend, at whose house he *concealed* himself, Gustavus repaired to Mora, where an annual feast of the peasantry was held. There, as his last resource, he *displayed* with so much nature, eloquence, and *energy* the miseries of his country and the *tyranny* of Christiern, that the assembly instantly *determined* to take up arms, and *adopted* him as their leader. While their hearts were *glowing* with an ardent *patriotism*, Gustavus led them against the governor's castle, which they *stormed*, and took or destroyed the whole *garrison*. *Success* increased his forces ; multitudes were *eager* to enlist under the banner of the *conquering* hero, Gustavus. At the head of his little army he overran the neighboring provinces, *defeated* the Archbishop of Upsal, and *advanced* to Stockholm. Christiern, who had in vain attempted to *stop* the progress of Gustavus by the threat of *massacring* his mother and sisters, at length put the dreadful menace into *execution*. The cruel deed animated Gustavus to a severer *venge*. He assembled the *gates* of Sweden at Wadstena, where he was *unanimously chosen* administrator ; and after a *variety* of military transactions, he laid siege to Stockholm. Stockholm *surrendered*, and the Danes were *completely* expelled from Sweden.

*Columbus on the New World.*—After a *brief interval*, the *sovereigns* requested of Columbus a *recital* of his adventures. His *manner* was *sedate* and dignified, but warmed by the *glow* of natural *enthusiasm*. He *enumerated* the *several* islands he had *visited*, *expatiated* on the temperate *character* of the climate, and the *capacity* of the soil for every *variety* of production, *appealing* to the *samples* imported by him as *evidence* of their natural *productiveness*. He *dwelt* more at large on the *precious* metals to be found in these islands, which he inferred less from the specimens *actually obtained* than from the *uniform testimony* of the natives to their *abundance* in the *unexplored* regions of the interior. Lastly, he pointed out the wide *scope* afforded to Christian zeal in the *illumination* of a race of men whose minds, far from being *wedded* to any system of idolatry, were *prepared* by their *extreme* simplicity for the *reception* of pure and *un-corrupted* doctrine. The last *consideration* touched Isabella's heart

most *sensibly*; and the whole *audience*, kindled with various *emotions* by the speaker's eloquence, filled up the perspective with the *gorgeous coloring* of their own *fancies*, as ambition, or avarice, or *devotional feeling predominated* in their bosoms. When Columbus ceased, the king and queen, together with all present, *prostrated* themselves on their knees in *grateful thanksgivings*, while the solemn strains of the Te Deum were *poured forth* by the choir of the royal chapel, as in *commemoration* of some *glorious victory*.

*Alfred and the Danes.*—At the *confluence* of the rivers Paret and Tone there were about two acres of dry land, *surrounded* by swamps, which afterward became *celebrated* under the name of the Prince's Island. Here, *alone* and in disguise, he was *sheltered* in the cottage of a poor cowherd, who, in *ignorance* of his *real dignity*, was taught to believe him some fugitive chief whose *circumstances required* a temporary *seclusion*. A *lively picture* of the condition to which he was *reduced* is *preserved* in the well-known *anecdote*, which he himself was *accustomed* to *recite* in his *happier* hours, of the *chiding* he *patiently endured* from the *shrewish* wife of his host for *allowing* her cakes to be burned. To this *retreat* he *gradually summoned* a few of his most *faithful retainers*, *fortified* its only *accessible approach*, and *began* to make *successful excursions* upon *struggling parties* of the enemy. But the first *ray* of hope *broke* from another *quarter*. About four months after the *invasion* by Guthrum, another *division* of his countrymen, landing in Devonshire under the *ferocious* Ubba, *laid siege* to the castle of Kenwyth, into which the *brave* Ealdorman Odun and a few *subordinate chiefs* had *hastily thrown themselves*. In a *desperate sally* the *garrison* succeeded in *surprising* the camp of the *invaders*, and *slaying* Ubba himself; an *event* which struck such *terror* into his followers that they left their *enchanted standard*, the Raven of Woden, in the hands of the *victors*.

*Retreat of Sir John Moore.*—The British *troops*, under Sir John Moore, were now *advancing* from Portugal into Spain to *co-operate* with the patriots. In the course of his *march*, the British general soon *discovered* how *fallacious* and *exaggerated* were the *impressions* entertained in England *respecting* the condition of the Spaniards, and their *ability* or *inclination* to *offer* an *effective resistance* to the enemy. He *continued* his march, however, in order to *comply*, as far as *possible*, with the *expectations* of the ministry, and the *urgent representa-*

tions made to him ; till at length, having *learned* that Madrid had *fallen*, and that Bonaparte had *quitted* that city at the head of a *superior force*, with the *view of taking up* a position in the rear of the British, while another *army* under Soult *lay* in front, he found it *indispensable* to make a *prompt retreat*. This he *accomplished* in the most *masterly* manner, though the weather was *severe*, *provisions scanty*, the *inhabitants* of the country *cold* and *unfriendly*, and a *ret-eran army*, *greatly superior* in numbers, *pressing on his rear*. This *famous retreat* closed at Corunna on the 11th of January, 1809, having been *attended with* the loss of many men from *disorder*, and the *sacrifice* of many horses from *want* of forage ; but without a *standard* being taken, or a single check *sustained* in *action*. The *transports*, on board of which the troops were to *embark*, *unfortunately* did not *reach* Corunna till two days after the *arrival* of the army. *In consequence* of this *delay* it became *necessary* to *risk* an *engagement* on the 6th, in very *disadvantageous* circumstances, and *against an enemy* greatly superior in numbers. In spite of this *disparity*, however, the French were *everywhere repulsed*, and *compelled to retreat* with the loss of two thousand men. But the *gallant* Sir John Moore was *mortally wounded* in the *action* by a cannon-ball. General Baird being also disabled, Sir John Hope took the command, and succeeded in *embarking* the troops, and bringing them off *safely* without further *molestation*.

**How much** depends upon the choice of words is shown in the following poem of Coleridge's, printed as it appears in his collected works, with interlineations in small type showing the changes of expression made in quoting it for "Dana's Household Book of Poetry."

## COMPLAINT.

[The Good, Great Man.]

How seldom, friend, a good great man inherits  
Honor or wealth, with all his worth and pains !

[and]  
It sounds like story from the land of spirits  
[seems a] [world]

If any man obtain that which he merits.

[When] [obtains]  
Or any merits that which he obtains.

## REPROOF.

[Omitted.]

For shame, my friend ! renounce this canting strain !

[idle]

What wouldst thou have a good great man obtain ?

Place, titles, salary, a gilded chain,

[Wealth] [title] [dignity] [golden]

Or throne of corpses which his sword hath slain ?

[heap]

Greatness and goodness are not means, but ends,

[Goodness and greatness]

Hath he not always treasures, always friends,

The good great man ? these treasures, love and light,

[great good] [three]

And calm thoughts, equable as infant's breath ;

And three firm friends, more sure than day and night—

[fast]

[or]

Himself, his maker, and the angel death.

[Maker]

[Death]

In the third line of the "Reproof," for instance, all of Coleridge's words are more powerful than Dana's, because by expressing less intrinsic value they show more strongly the worthlessness of the objects referred to ; and in the next line, the substitution of *heap* for *throne* eliminates the implied idea that the great man's elevation is not only accompanied by but based on the woes of others. For the uses of *or* and *and*, see pages cxxi, cxxii, where it will appear that both the substitutions made are erroneous.

(b) **Equivocal Words** are those that may be taken in more senses than one. "He overlooked the transaction," may mean either that he supervised it, or that he forgave it.

"What I want," shouted a stump-speaker, "is common sense." "Exactly so," replied his opponent. (See a similar example on page 266.)



"The Queen did not *want* solicitation to consent to the measure."

The word "want" may imply either that she did not *desire* solicitation, or that she *was* not *without* it.

"Henry had been from his youth *attached* to the Church of Rome."

This may mean either that he had been *fond* of the church, or that he had been *a member* of it.

"Exactly at eight the mother came up, and *discovered* that supper was not far off."

"Discovered" may be taken in either of two senses. It may imply *found out*, or it may imply *made known, revealed*.

"The minister's *resignation*, in these circumstances, cannot be too highly praised."

Does this mean his *having resigned* his office, or his *being resigned* to his fate? "Retirement" would imply the one meaning, "submission" the other. If the former is intended, say "the minister's resignation of his office;" if the latter, say "the resignation exhibited by the minister."

(c) **General Words** instead of individual words are often affected by young writers. They are as fatal to precision as to every other quality of good style. (See pages 225, 240, 420.)

Those beautiful English words, *boys* and *girls*, are almost banished from our modern vocabulary. *Boys* and *girls* are transformed into *juveniles*; *workmen* have become *operatives*; and *people* in general are now *individuals*. These *individuals*, be it observed, are never *dressed*, but always *attired* or *arrayed*; they are never *angry*, but often *irate*; they never *go into a shop*, though they sometimes condescend to *enter an emporium*, or perhaps a *dépôt*; and when they return home they never *take off their things*, but *divest themselves of their habiliments*.

Another practice with these writers is to substitute for single terms milk-and-water definitions of them. With them a *fire* is *always the devouring element*; a *man* is *an individual of the masculine gender*; a *footman* is *a superb menial*; and a *school-master* is *the principal of a collegiate institution*.—GRAHAM.

The pet phrases [a "pet phrase" of Mr. Marsh himself] of hack journalists, the euphemism that but lately characterized the American newspapers, are fast giving place to less affected and more appropriate forms of expression. It is only the lowest class of dailies that still regard "woman" as not an honorable or respectful designation of the sex, and it is in their columns alone that, in place of "well-dressed or handsome women," we read of "elegantly attired females" and of "beautiful ladies."—MARSH.

Coleridge says of one of his old school-masters :

In our own English compositions (at least for the last three years of our English education), he showed no mercy to phrase, metaphor, or image, unsupported by a sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words. *Lute, harp, and lyre, Muse, Muses, and inspirations, Pegasus, Parnassus, and Hippocrene*, were all an abomination to him. In fancy I can almost hear him now, exclaiming, "Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? Your nurse's daughter, you mean! Pierian spring? Oh aye! the cloister pump, I suppose."

Coleridge adds that it is worthy of ranking as a maxim in criticism, that whatever is translatable in other and simpler words of the same language, without loss of sense or dignity, is bad. By dignity, he means the absence of ludicrous or debasing associations.—iii. 147.

(2) **Construction** may lack precision through (a) Excessive Brevity, (b) Redundance, (c) Affectation, (d) Looseness of Thought.

(a) **Brevity** is the soul of wit; but it must consist in the compactness and exactness of the thought, not in a curtailed expression of it. It is excessive whenever it leads to lack of precision, by (i) the Omission of Necessary Words; or by (ii) the use of Ambiguous Pronouns.

Bad judges (and how few are not so!) desire in composition the concise and obscure; not knowing that the one most frequently arises from paucity of materials, and the other from inability to manage and dispose them.—LANDOR.

(i) **The Omission of Necessary Words** is illustrated in the following examples:

I must now **make to you** a general assertion, which, if you will

note [it] down and examine [it] at your leisure, you will find both true and useful.—RUSKIN.

Harry eyed her with such a rapture as the first lover is described as having by Milton.—THACKERAY.

[The meaning probably is, “as the first lover is described by Milton as having eyed his mistress with.”]

How to nurse and take care of their children long before she had one [child] herself.—ID.

There is never wanting a set of evil instruments who either out of mad zeal, private hatred, or [greed for] filthy lucre, are always ready.—SWIFT.

He lamented the fatal mistake the world had been [making] so long in using silk-worms.—SWIFT.

That the discoursing on politics shall be looked upon as dull as talking on the weather.—*Freeholder*.

[Campbell suggests another *as* before the first *as* ; perhaps *to be* would be better.]

I do not reckon we want a genius more than the rest of our neighbors [do].—SWIFT.

His diet was abstemious, his prayers [were] long and fervent.—GIBBON.

I am anxious for the time when he will talk as much nonsense to me as I have [talked] to him.—LANDOR.

He says, *inter alia* :

The correspondence alone which I have to conduct is at once extensive and demanding thoughtful attention, but I never *have*, nor ever will, allow literary work to interfere with the performance of pastoral.

You *never have allow* that, doctor, the magistrate means, Mr. Editor, and he hopes, too, that you *never will allowed* it, never no more. “Literary work,” indeed.—MOON.

Friends and children who come after me, in which way will you bear your trials ? I know one that prays God will give you love rather than pride, and that the Eye all-seeing shall find you in the humble place. Not that we should judge proud spirits otherwise than charitably. 'Tis nature hath fashioned some for ambition and dominion, as it hath formed others for obedience and gentle submission. The leopard follows his nature as the lamb does [?]. She can neither help her beauty, nor her courage, nor

her cruelty, not a single spot on her shining coat; nor the conquering spirit which impels her; nor the shot which brings her down.—THACKERAY, *Esmond*.

**DETERMINATIVES.**—In spite of the necessity of frequently introducing determinatives in languages with few inflections, it will in general be found that a given period framed wholly in Anglo-Saxon will contain as few words, perhaps even fewer, than the same thought expressed in the Romance dialect of English. The reason of this is that the unpleasant effect of the frequent recurrence of particles has obliged us to invent forms of expression in which such members, though grammatically required to complete the period, are dispensed with, and we use these forms with less repugnance in Saxon combinations, where they were first employed, than in Latin ones, which are of later introduction and less familiar structure. Thus we say, "The man I bought the house of," "The man we were talking of;" and we may with equal grammatical propriety say, "The gentleman I purchased the house of," "The person we were conversing of;" but we should be much more likely to employ a more formal syntax, "The gentleman of whom I purchased the house," "The person of whom we were conversing." Again, one would say, "I told him I had called on General Taylor," omitting the conjunction *that* before the second member of the period; but if we employed Romance words, we should more probably retain the conjunction, as, "I informed him *that* I had paid my respects to the President." Although, then, the Anglo-Saxon so far controls all other elements that we may grammatically employ foreign words in the same way as native ones, yet a half-conscious sense of linguistic congruity usually suggests a more formal structure of the period, when it is composed chiefly of Romance radicals.—MARSH.

(ii) **Ambiguous Pronouns** are so great an evil in composition that Bain says the clearness of composition depends more upon the use of *he, she, it, they*, than upon any other single matter coming within the scope of grammar.

The word *it* is the greatest troubler that I know of in the language. It is so small, and so convenient, that few are careful enough in using it. Writers seldom spare this word. Whenever

they are at a loss for either a nominative or an adjective to their sentence, they, without any kind of ceremony, clap in an *it*.—COBBETT.

Rewrite the following sentence so as to avoid the confusion of *its*.

It is many times as troublesome to make good the pretence of a good quality as to have it; and if a man have it not, it is ten to one but he is discovered to want it, and then all his pains and labors to seem to have it are lost.

On the other hand, *it* is sometimes needlessly avoided. Thus:

During our stay in town one young man had his cheek cut open; another his under-lip nearly taken off; a third his scalp cut in two; and a fourth the tip of his nose so thoroughly excised that *the end of his nasal organ* [it] lay upon the ground.—HENRY MAYHEW, *German Life*, ii., 67.

A STRIKING ILLUSTRATION.—You say, “While treating of the pronunciation of those who minister in public, two other words occur to me which are very commonly mangled by our clergy.

One of <sup>A</sup> *these* is ‘covetous,’ and its substantive ‘covetousness.’ I hope some who read *these lines* will be induced to leave off pronouncing <sup>B</sup> *them* ‘covetious’ and ‘covetiousness.’ I can assure <sup>C</sup> *them* that when <sup>D</sup> *they* do thus call <sup>E</sup> *them*, one at least of <sup>F</sup> *their* hearers has his appreciation of <sup>G</sup> *their* teaching disturbed.”

I fancy that many a one who reads these lines will have *his* appreciation of *your* teaching disturbed, as far as it relates to the Queen’s English. But now for the changes which may be rung on these bells, as I have called them. The first of them, *A*, may apply either to *words* or to *our clergy*. One of *these* is “covetous.” I am sorry to say that the general belief is that there are more than *one*; but perhaps you know one in particular. However, my remarks interrupt the bell-ringing, and we want to count the changes, so I will say no more, but will at once demonstrate

that we can ring 10,240 changes on your peal of bells! In other words, that your paragraph, of less than ten lines, is so ambiguously worded that, without any alteration of its grammar or syntax, it may be read in 10,240 different ways! and only one of all that number shall be the right way to express your meaning.

The Pronouns.	Nouns to which they may apply.	No. of Nouns.	No. of Different Readings.
A, <i>these</i> ...	words, or clergy.....	2	..... 2
B, <i>them</i> ...	words, clergy, readers, or lines.	4	these 4 x by the above 2 = 8
C, <i>them</i> ...	" " " " "	4	these 4 x " " 8 = 32
D, <i>they</i> ...	" " " " "	4	the-e 4 x " " 32 = 128
E, <i>them</i> ...	" " " " "	4	these 4 x " " 128 = 512
F, <i>their</i> ...	" " " " "	4	these 4 x " " 512 = 2,048
G, <i>their</i> ...	words, clergy, readers, lines, or hearers.....	5	these 5 x " " 2,048 = 10,240

—MOON.

He [Macaulay] has a perfect hatred of pronouns, and for fear of a possible entanglement between "him's" and "her's" and "it's," he will repeat not merely a substantive but a whole group of substantives. Sometimes, to make his sense unmistakable, he will repeat a whole formula with only a change in the copula.—LESLIE STEPHEN.

OTHER INSTANCES OF AMBIGUOUS PRONOUNS.—They [those historians] who have talents want industry or virtue; they [those] who have industry want talents.—SOUTHEY.

*His* servant being ill, *he* had consented to allow *his* brother, a timid youth from the country, to take *his* place for a short time, and for that short time *he* was a constant source of annoyance.—*Life of C. J. Matthews.*

Lisias promised to his father never to abandon *his* friends.—*Quoted by CAMPBELL.*

My good lord often talked of visiting that land in Virginia which King Charles gave us—gave *his* ancestor.—THACKERAY.

The war then exciting attention to the American Colonies as one of the chief points in dispute, *they* came out in two volumes octavo.—PRIOR, *Life of Burke.*

Men look with an evil eye upon the good that is in others, and think that *their* reputation obscures *them*, and that *their* commend-

able qualities stand in *their* light ; and therefore *they* do what *they* can to cast a cloud over *them*, that the shining of *their* virtues may not obscure *them*.—TILLOTSON.

There are some men who allow the sex no virtues because *they* allow *them* no favors.—FIELDING.

The exercise of reason appears as little in *them* as in the beasts *they* sometimes hunt, and by whom *they* are sometimes hunted.—BOLINGBROKE.

There is no popular Life of Bossuet to be found in France—Cardinal de Bausset's is the only *one* [life], and that is bulky and dry.—Bossuet and his Contemporaries.

In any testimony (whether oral or written) that is unwillingly borne, it will more frequently consist in something incidentally implied than in a distinct statement.—WHATELY.

Mr. A. presents his compliments to Mrs. B. *I* have got a hat which is not *his* ; if *he* have got a hat which is not *yours*, no doubt they are the missing one.—HODGSON.

Even in this short sentence we may discern an inaccuracy—*why our language is less refined than those of Italy, France, and Spain* ; putting the pronoun *those* in the plural, when the antecedent substantive to which it refers is in the singular, *our Language*.—BLAIR.

[Here Blair is manifestly in error. The sentence should read, *why our language is less refined than are the languages of Italy, France, and Spain*. (See page cxxv.)]

Find other instances of ambiguous pronouns on pages 45, 70, 240.

**A genderless personal noun** is a marked want of the English language, as witness the following :

When *everybody* [all] can ride as soon as *they* are born.—SYDNEY SMITH.

It is true that when perspective was first discovered, *everybody* [all] amused themselves with it.—RUSKIN.

*Each* of the sexes should keep within *its* proper bounds, and content *themselves* to exult within *their* respective districts.—ADDISON.

Each prayed for the other rather than for themselves.—MRS. GASKELL.

When it took a twelvemonth's hard work to make a single volume legible, men considered a little the difference between one book and another; but now, when not only *anybody* can get *themselves* made legible, through any quantity of volumes, in a week, but the doing so becomes a living to them, and they can fill their stomach with the foolish foam of their lips, the universal pestilence of falsehood fills the mind of the world as cicadas do olive-leaves, and the first necessity of our mental government is to extricate from *among* the insectal *noise* the few notes and words that are divine.—RUSKIN.

It is probably through the habit of using a plural pronoun when the antecedent is of both sexes that the plural is sometimes used for the singular when the antecedent includes only one sex. Thus:

*Each of the girls went up into their [her] separate rooms [room] to rest and calm themselves [herself].—MRS. GASKELL.*

[Hodgson corrects the sentence as above, but the meaning is better preserved by substituting *all* for *each of*.]

**The use of "one"** as a personal pronoun, corresponding with the French *On dit* and the German *Man sagt*, is growing in favor, and is beginning to be characteristic of the best-bred speech.

*One doth not know*

How much an ill word may empoison liking.—*Much Ado about Nothing*.

See examples on pages 4, 5, 9, 18, etc. Avoid awkwardness by substituting *one* for *he* or *she* on page 47.

**Reflexive Pronouns** require care, as witness the following:

If this trade be fostered, we shall gain from one nation; and if another, from another.

Which might help us to discover the conformity or disagreeableness of the one to the other.—ADDISON.

The greatest masters of critical learning differ among one another.—*Spectator*.



Hereafter, when trains moving in an opposite direction are approaching each other on separate lines, conductors and engineers will be required to bring their respective trains to a dead halt before the point of meeting, and be very careful not to proceed until each train has passed the other.

A writer in the *Atlantic* of the death of Dabney Carr, the brother-in-law of Thomas Jefferson, says :

Mindful of the romantic agreement of their youth that whichever died first, should bury the other under the giant oak on Monticello, etc., etc.

This is rather hard on "the other"—and on Mr. Jefferson—and on the corpse.—*Danbury News*.

(b) **Redundance** is fatal to precision.

Looseness from redundance is specially apt to occur in speaking on difficult themes to the popular mind. Under such conditions, one is apt to explain, to qualify, to repeat, to speak in circumlocutory phrase, to experiment with variation. These easily overwhelm the thought with words. One then loses precision in the effort to be perspicuous. Style moves askant and askew in the effort to move at all. Sometimes the very struggle to be precise—the mind, in the very act of composing, being intent on precision—may defeat itself. Here, again, thought is overborne by the machinery employed to give it utterance. Writers who pride themselves on philosophical accuracy are apt to multiply qualifications, and circumstantial incidents, and secondary clauses, and parenthetical disclosures, so that no possible error shall be affirmed ; but that very strain after accuracy defeats its aim through the mere expansion of bulk and involution of connections. When a dozen words might have been understood, a dozen dozen may fall dead on the ear.

Edmund Burke sometimes illustrates this. In one of his elaborate sentences you will sometimes find words and clauses selected and multiplied and arranged and compacted and qualified and defined and repeated, for the very purpose of extending and limiting the truth to its exact and undoubted measure. He obviously labors to say just what he means—no more, no less, no other. Still, on the whole, he fails, because he is so elaborately precise in details. The thought is suffocated by the multitude of words

employed to give it life. It is buried alive. To change the figure, you can divide and subdivide a field into so many, so small, so regular, and so exact patches, that the chief impression it shall leave on your eye is that of the fences. Similar is the impression of an excessively precise style.—PHELPS.

It is needful to insist the more on the energetic effect of conciseness, because so many, especially young writers and speakers, are apt to fall into a style of pompous verbosity, not from negligence, but from an idea that they are adding to the perspicuity and force of what is said, when they are only encumbering the sense with a needless load of words. And they are the more likely to commit this mistake because such a style will often appear not only to the author but to the vulgar (*i. e.*, vulgar in intellect) among his hearers to be very majestic and impressive. It is not uncommon to hear a speaker or writer of this class mentioned as having a very fine command of language, when perhaps it might be said with more correctness that his language had a command of him; *i. e.*, that he follows a train of words rather than of thought, and strings together all the more striking expressions that occur to him on the subject, instead of first forming a clear notion of the sense he wishes to convey, and then seeking the most appropriate vehicle in which to convey it. He has but the same command of language that the rider has of a horse that runs away with him.—WHEATELY.

For illustration, on page 222 it is said that the printer's place will not be easily filled by his equal. It would be precise to say that his place would not be easily filled, or that it would not be easy to find his equal. But there is no reason why his equal should not fill his place easily enough.

(c) **Affectation** is a prevailing enemy to precision. Young writers are slow to learn that the simplest, most direct statement of a thought is the best; and they strive to array ideas that they recognize as commonplace in distinguished language. (See pages 193, 197, 349.)

A two-foot rule was given to a laborer in a Clyde boat-yard to

measure an iron plate. The laborer, not being well up in the use of the rule, after spending a considerable time, returned. "Noo, Mick," asked the plater, "what size is the plate?" "Well," replied Mick, with a grin of satisfaction, "it's the length of your rule and two thumbs over, with this piece of brick, and the breadth of my hand and my arm from here to there, bar a finger." —*Punch*.

We laugh at the workman for employing thirty-two words and six kinds of measurement to express what would have been more exactly understood if he had said "thirty-three inches." But his blunder was due to ignorance of the use of the rule. Had he been accustomed to the rule, and had the circumlocution been an affectation of elegance, or an attempt to make the measurement seem more important, he would have been discharged for idiocy. Yet his fault would have been no greater than that of the reporter who writes that "the devouring element is devastating the capacious granary of one of our most influential citizens," when he means that a fire has broken out in John Smith's barn.

A writer in the *Westminster Review* discourses after this fashion :

Another curious observation upon philosophic activity is, that the co-ordination of all the functions which constitute the whole intellectual energy of philosophic minds is preserved in its plenitude for only a short period of their whole duration of life. There occurs, and generally at a period of middle life, an epoch when the assimilation of scientific material and its ulterior elaboration proceed with an energy more vigorous and more continuous than is ever afterward attained by the same mind. This phase of philosophical superactivity is always succeeded by an intellectual phase characterized by less expenditure of simultaneous powers.

I do not say that this has no meaning. But what is its meaning? If I do not miss it in the volume of its long-tailed vocabulary, it is this, and this is the whole of it—that the mind of a metaphysician is more vigorous for a time near middle life than it ever is afterward. Why could not the reviewer say that, if he must say a thing so obvious, and be content? . . .

That a profound mind doing honest work cannot make profound thought clear, implies intellectual disease or imbecility in the rest of mankind to an extent which is never true, except in effete or decadent races. It is more probable that some of our philosophical writers strain after the look of profoundness when the reality is not in them. That was a perilous principle which Coleridge advanced respecting the capacity of human language, that it cannot express certain metaphysical ideas, and therefore that clearness of style in a metaphysical treatise is *prima facie* evidence of superficialness. As Coleridge was accustomed to illustrate it, the pool in which you can count the pebbles at the bottom is shallow water; the fathomless depth is that in which you can only see the reflection of your own face. This would be true if thinking were water. But the principle opens the way to the most stupendous impositions upon speculative science. It tempts authors to the grossest affectations in style. In the study of modern psychology, therefore, a preacher needs to be on his guard. We may safely treat as a fiction in philosophy anything which claims to be a discovery, yet cannot make itself understood without huge and unmanageable contortions of the English tongue.—PHELPS.

**Bombast**, which originally meant the cotton wadding with which garments are stuffed and lined, is now appropriately applied to inflated diction, words that are big but empty. (See page 223.)

As one of the faults of over-civilization, an intellectual as well as a personal coxcomby is apt to prevail, which leads people to expect from each other a certain dashing turn of mind, and an appearance at least of having ideas, whether they can afford them or not.—LEIGH HUNT.

Ignorant and unreflecting persons, though they cannot be, strictly speaking, convinced by what they do not understand, yet will very often suppose each that the rest understand it; and each is ashamed to acknowledge even to himself his own darkness and perplexity: so that if the speaker with a confident air announces his conclusion as established, they will often, according to the maxim *omne ignotum pro magifico*, take for granted he has advanced valid arguments, and will be loath to seem behindhand in

comprehending them. It usually requires that a man should have some confidence in his own understanding to venture to say, "What has been spoken is unintelligible to me."—*WHATELY*.

I have heard of a preacher who, desirous to appear very profound, and to make observations on the commonest subjects, which had never occurred to anybody before, remarked as an instance of the goodness of Providence that the moments of time come successively and not simultaneously or together, which last method of coming would, he said, occasion infinite confusion in the world.—*CAMPBELL*.

See similar illustration at foot of page 85.

*Examples of Bombast* are unhappily frequent; the newspapers are full of them. Here are a few. (See also pages 306, 307.)

"Mr. and Mrs. D——, Boston, U. S. A. Best and most prosperous country under the sun. Thank God! Just arrived from Chamouny on mules; pleased with the mountains." This is an inscription on a Swiss hotel register. The mules could not write.—*Golden Age*.

A young man at Elkhart, Ind., has started a six-column weekly paper with the avowed object of "restoring to the Republic its wonted grandeur and prosperity." You can't do it, young fellow. We tried for six years to restore the Republic to its wonted grandeur and prosperity by publishing the ablest paper in this country and taking turnips and slab wood on subscription, and never had money enough to buy a dog; but of late years we have let the wonted grandeur of the Republic shirk for itself, and on the first of January we had over six dollars.—*Peck's Sun*.

"Young Subscriber" wants to know "what is an organ?" It is the opposition paper, my son; the vile and truckling sheet through whose venomous maw, fetid with vice and festering with the loathsome corruption in which it daily wallows, the other party, blistered with the plague spot of political leprosy, sewers the noisome filth of its pestilential ideas. Gur-r-r!! That's what an organ is, my boy. Our own paper is a Fearless and Outspoken Champion for the Truth. You may have noticed that.—*Burlington Hawkeye*.

Congress has been under bad influences, according to the Hon. Rollin M. Daggett, of Nevada, who, in a late speech to the House, remarked :

"Many-tongued rumor, the unblest evangel of calumny, has more than hinted that to the glitter of gold have been added the enchantments of beauty to warp the judgments of men, and that the corporate Aladdins of the land, whose influence it is impossible not to feel, even in the inner chambers of this temple, have called to their council both the sightless son of Ceres and the star-eyed cyprian whose home is on the heights."

Mr. Daggett himself is inclined to charitably disbelieve these reports; but even his alleged disbelief is not reassuring, because this is its basis :

"Even were it possible for me to believe them, over my shoulders I would hang the mantle of doubt, and, like the blessed of Noah's sons, walk backward with it to cover the infamy before the world beheld it or our own eyes were blasted by the unwelcome vision."

The matter would seem to be one for inquiry, even if the sightless son of Ceres and the star-eyed cyprian had to be summoned to testify.—*New York Sun*.

A young lady, Miss Alice Ilgenfritz, delivered an address on journalism to the Fourth Iowa District Press Association the other day. We find her essay in the *Burlington Hawk-eye*. She thinks that there is still room at the top, and that a neglect of literary finish is one of the great faults of American newspapers. Instead of dwelling on and polishing up their ideas, men think more of making a speedy and advantageous sale of them. Miss Alice is a rather clever girl, but she must not dwell on her ideas too long, or polish them up too elaborately. The result of too much literary finish is seen in such amazing passages as this in her address to the Iowa editors: "I am thankful for the iconoclastic spades which are rooting up old saws that have become stripped of all significance, like Cleopatra's Needle, by being removed from their natural surroundings."—*New York Sun*.

A snicky, fussy, round little man stepped up to the first waiter in a new oyster saloon in Sixth Avenue, and said :

"Have you got any really nice, fresh, good oysters?"

"Yes, sir."

"Not too fat, you know—but not thin, either. I want them just exactly right, and I want them perfectly fresh."

"How will you have them—half shell?"

"Stop a moment," said the little man; "if you have got just the right kind in just the right condition, please take half a pint of small ones (not too small, you know) and strain the juice off them carefully, leaving just a little juice on them; put them in a pan which has been scoured and dried, and then add a little butter (good pure butter) and a little milk (not New York milk, but real country cow's milk), and then place the pan over a coal fire and be careful to keep the pan in motion so as not to let the oysters or the milk burn: add a little juice if you choose, and then watch the pan closely so that the exact moment it comes to a boil you can whip it off. At the same time have a deep

dish warming near at hand, and when you see the first sign of boiling empty the pan into the dish. Do you think you can remember that?"

"One stew!" the waiter called out.—*Retailer.*

The mellow light that suffused this valley at the dawn of the anniversary of the birth of liberty on Tuesday morning was reflected upon a canvas that was pure and virgin; the brush of circumstances had never visited it, and it was rung up by the Divine Creator amid the din and noise of the universe—yes, it revealed a day that was bright with the contributions of nature. Here below everybody was in an apparently happy mood, and the spirit of good-fellowship seemed to prevail. The air was aromatic with the smoke and fumes of hot salt-petre, and the resonant sound of cannon was mingled with the roar of human voices and the shrieks of steam whistles. The streets were thronged with participants in Fourth of July festivities, and everybody abandoned themselves to a general good time. But there was a tragedy rapidly incubating, and it was to cast a gloom and terrible awe over the happy features of the natal day of freedom. The bullet was to play its part and stab hilarity to the heart. Between two and three o'clock, while peace supported the sceptre, commotion and strife suddenly seized it and tore along Harrison Avenue. Guns were seen glittering in the sunlight, and a man was seen tottering across the street. It was Tommy Bennett who had been shot.—*Leadville Herald.*

Let it be written on every leaf that trembles in the Canadian and American forests, every blade of grass that waves in the morning breeze, every sail that whitens the sea of commerce; let it blaze from the sun at noontide and be reflected in the milder radiance of every star that bedecks the firmament of God, let it echo through the arches of heaven and reverberate through the corridors of our national temple, that the grand and sympathetic words of Queen Victoria which flashed on the wings of electricity over the Atlantic cable and hovered like a guardian angel over the bed of the dying President Garfield, were words of pearls and diamonds set in the necklace of international unity and harmony, hung around the neck of the Goddess of Liberty.—*CONSUL A. B. ELLIOTT.*

Now I haven't the slightest disposition to become hyperbolic, nor in any way to misrepresent or exaggerate the state of facts relative to the repeated annoyance to which I have been subjected, both by envious, jealous, and half-educated renegades and counterfeits, pretending to be of my own political faith and friendly to me, and the ridiculously insane and contemptible howlings of a partisan press; but I do wish to say, that if there be an adult of masculine persuasion on the face of this mundane sphere, upon whom attempts at persecution are being daily and hourly enacted, and by a class of men, neither represented by the honest, fair-minded, and hard-working mechanics, nor by the purely high-toned, reliable, and justice-dealing business men of this community, that very unfavored individual is your most obedient and humble subscriber. Throwing aside everything in the shape of political sentiment, and giving heed to naught but the spirit of justice and fairness among men, as they live, move, and have their being in the world, I desire to say that I have, at all times, endeavored to comply strictly, and have complied strictly, I flatter myself, with all the requirements of the law, in the discharge of my official duties, and that it is my solemn purpose to continue to do so during my occupancy of the public position with which fortune, fate, chance, or circumstances have found or burdened me.—*SHERIFF CROSBY, in the Vicksburg Herald.*

The American people—and we are glad to call ourselves that—are rocked on the bosom of two mighty oceans, whose granite-bound shores are whitened by the floating canvas of the commercial world; reaching from the ice-fettered lakes of the north to the febrile waves of Australian seas, comprising the vast interim of five billions of acres, whose alluvial plains, romantic mountains, and mystic rivers rival the wildest Utopian

dreams that ever gathered around the inspired bard, as he walked the amaranthine promenades of Hesperian gardens, is proud Columbia, the land of the free and the home of the brave.—*Legislator HEYWOOD on Gravel Roads, January 21, 1871.*

**Affected Humor** is akin to bombast. The inconvenience of being a recognized wit has already been pointed out (see page 129). Even genuine humorists sometimes lap over the narrow boundary that separates the facetious from the imbecile.

Bret Harte, invited to appear before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard College, prepared and read a poem of which the plot was the inflation with hydrogen and the subsequent explosion of the skirts of a young woman who wanted ampler crinoline than her neighbors. Mark Twain, responding to a toast at an Atlantic dinner, represented the adventures in a mining district of three gambling cut-throats, who called themselves Longfellow, Whittier, and Emerson. The newspapers had already begun to quote this speech as his latest and wittiest, when it came to light that the guests had listened first with amazement and then with ill-concealed disgust, and that Mr. Clemens had written a most abject letter of apology.

Where men like these fail, it is not strange that dabblers are often misled. For instance :

Revenge was once man's highest duty ; revenge became his choicest pleasure. Now it has sunk in the scale of enjoyments to the rank of wife-beating and skittles.

Take the case of Smiler, for instance. There is not a better nor a more equable creature in existence. He can remain calm when his cook sends him up an uneatable dinner. The appearance of an unexpected milliner's bill is not sufficient to throw him off his balance. He is able to witness his sons playing havoc with his furniture without experiencing an inclination to commit murder.—*Liberal Review.*

(d) **Looseness of Thought** is, however, the commonest cause of looseness of language. Rhetorical principles can do little for minds that express themselves satisfactorily in sentences like the following.

He knew an Irishman who, overcome by heat, lay six weeks speechless in the month of August, and all his cry was "water."—*Quoted by SCHELE DE VERE.*

This extraordinary man left no children except his brother, who was killed at the same time.—*Memoir of Robespierre.*



A deaf man named Taff was run down by a passenger train and killed on Wednesday morning. He was injured in a similar way about a year ago.—*New Jersey Journal*.

Monthly school reports must be handed in on Wednesday of each week to insure their publication.

On a bridge at Athens, Ga., was the following: "Any person driving over this bridge in a faster pace than a walk shall, if a white person, be fined \$5, and if a negro, receive twenty-five lashes, half the penalty to be bestowed on the informer."

A Mr. Crispin of Oxford announced that he sold "boots and shoes made by celebrated Hoby, London." Mr. Hoby, irate, put into the Oxford paper, "The boots and shoes Mr. Crispin says he sells of my make is a lie."—ALFORD.

**Carelessness** often leads to expressions so exaggerated as to be absurd, or so loosely constructed as to be ridiculous.

A manufacturing wire-worker in an advertisement invites the public to come and see his invisible wire fences.

Of course, *every one will be there*, and for the edification of those who are absent, a full report will be found in our next paper.

The applause at the end of the scene was unanimous, having been heard in various parts of the house; there were few hisses.

I follow fate, which does too fast pursue.—DRYDEN.

Those who recommend the exclusive employment of either the simpler or the more complex words of our rich English, both err.—*Popular Grammar*.

Such was the end of Murat at the premature age of forty-eight.—ALISON.

The command was reluctantly forced upon Prince Eugene.—ALISON.

The first project was to shorten discourse by cutting polysyllables into one.—SWIFT.

To MILLERS.—To be let, a windmill, containing three pair of stones, a bakehouse, corn shop, and about five acres of land, dwelling-house, and garden.—ALFORD.

I had like to have got one or two broken heads for my impertinence.—SWIFT.

The editor of the *New England Journal of Education* says we referred to that committee matter at the American Institute in a "half-serious, half-truthful way."

That puzzles us. Is the half-truthful the same half as the half-serious, or is it the other half? If it is the same half what is the other half, and how many halves are there to that?—*School Bulletin*.

Another small banner bore the device: "Journeyman Stonecutters' Society;" on the back, "Eight Hours for Work, Eight Hours for Sleep, Eight Hours for Recreation, and Eight Hours for Rest." Still another banner had a similar inscription in German.

Eight hours for work does not seem out of the way, neither does eight hours for sleep; but to make a *thirty-two-hour day* might prove a difficult matter.

Barnum's tattooed Greek sailor was on exhibition in Albany, and the advertisement said:

He has upon his body 7,000,000 punctures, and it was all done by a female savage. The poor man lost a drop of blood and shed a tear for every puncture, and was the only one of twenty-four who survived the operation. The woman who did the tattooing worked six hours a day for ninety days before the task was completed.

A mathematician of the Albany *Express* figured as follows:

The woman must have given him  $3\frac{1}{2}$  punctures a second. Then, if he lost one drop of blood with every puncture, he lost, estimating the usual number of drops to a pint, and taking a pint for a pound, 5,833 pounds. Or, to put it differently, just 880 gallons of blood, or a trifle over twenty barrels during ninety days. Tears don't weigh as much as blood, so bunching the two together, the gentleman from Albania must have lost about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  tons of those fluids within three months.

Barnum's agent retorted that, if the Greek had not been a wonderful man, he would not have been exhibited.

**Collocation** may produce ambiguity in sentences that express the writer's meaning, but that are susceptible of another interpretation. Thus, a drug-store advertises pills as follows: "Try one box, and you will never take any other medicine." Of most articles, this would be an unimpeachable form of indorsement; but as the box of pills would make the guarantee good in case it killed the purchaser, the advertisement is ambiguous.

This ambiguity may be intentional, thus:

A familiar example is the word *got*, which may mean either *was*, or *procured*. Thus one boy says to another, with a grave face, "Fred got shot to-day." "Where?" asks the other, in alarm. "He got shot in a hardware store," is the answer—meaning, of course, that he bought it.

A man assured a storekeeper who hesitated to trust his companion for a purchase: "If he refuses to pay for it, I will." His companion refused to pay for it, and so did the speaker—as in one sense he had said he would.

A sheriff asked the wife of a Quaker against whom he had a writ if her husband was at home. She replied: "Yes; he will see thee in a moment." The sheriff waited; but the Quaker did not appear. He was contented with seeing the sheriff; he did not care that the sheriff should see him.

"Edward," said Mr. Rice, "what do I hear, that you have disobeyed your grandmother, who told you just now not to jump down these steps?" "Grandma didn't tell us not to, papa, she only came to the door and said, 'I wouldn't jump down those steps, boys,' and I shouldn't think she would, an old lady like her!"

"The candles you sold me last week were very bad," said Jerrold to a tallow-chandler. "Indeed, sir, I am very sorry for that." "Yes, sir; do you know they burnt to the middle, and then would burn no longer?" "You surprise me! What, sir, did they go out?" "No, sir, no; they burned shorter!"—*Mail*.

Many popular puzzles depend on the ambiguity or double meaning of words and phrases. Thus we are told there was a man who had six children, and had never seen one of them. We are led to suppose that none of the children had ever been beheld by their parent. But the words may mean equally as well that one of them had been born while the man was on a journey, and he had, consequently, never seen that one. Another puzzle is this. There was a poor blind beggar who had a brother: the brother died, but the man who died had no brother. What relation was the beggar to the man who died? We are apt to think that the beggar was a man; but, when we think that the beggar might be a girl, the answer becomes quite plain.

We are told of two men who met each other at an inn, and greeted each other affectionately. The hotel-keeper inquired of one how he was related to the other, who replied:

"Brother and sister have I none,  
Yet this man's father was my father's son."

This is a perfectly plain statement and yet there are few whose minds are clear enough to see at once that this jingle of words is only a roundabout way of saying that this man was the speaker's son.

"The New York Central fast express ran off the bridge at Schenectady to-day," cries out a man, in affected horror, as he rushes up to a crowd of people. After many exclamations and inquiries, he explains that after a train has run upon the bridge it generally does run off again.

"I hope, my lord, if you ever come within a mile of my house, you will stay there all night," wrote Sir Boyle Roche to a friend.

The proprietor of a phosphate mill advertises that parties sending their own bones to be ground will be attended to with fidelity and despatch. In like manner a chemist advertises: "The gentleman who left his stomach for analysis will please call and get it."

Notice at the door of a ready-made clothing establishment in one of the poorer quarters of Paris: "Do not go somewhere else to be robbed; walk in here."

"Furnished Lodgings.—A young man is open to hear of the above."—*Adv't.*

He must be the young man so easily seen through, because he had a pain in his chest and in his back. Perhaps it was he that testified in an application for life-insurance that his little brother died of some funny name.

"I propose introducing some new features into the service," said Rev. Mr. Textual. "All right," remarked Fogg. "New features in that pulpit are just what I am longing for."

A lion tamer quarrelled with his wife, a powerful virago, and was chased by her all around his tent. On being sorely pressed he took refuge in the cage among the lions. "Oh, you contemptible coward," she shouted, "come out if you dare."

An Irishman's friend having fallen into a slough, the Irishman called loudly to another for assistance. The latter, who was busily engaged in cutting a log, and wished to procrastinate, inquired, "How deep is the gentleman in?" "Up to his ankles." "Then there is plenty of time," said the other. "No, there is not," rejoined the first; "I forgot to tell you he's in head first."

This reminds one of the man who exasperated a painter by driving a close bargain for a half-length portrait. The portrait was delivered according to agreement, but proved to be of the lower half, stopping at the waist-belt.

Dominique, when at table with the King, kept his eyes on a

dish of partridges. The Prince, who noticed it, said to the servant, "Give that dish to Dominique." "What, Sire, and the partridges too?" The King replied, "Yes! and the partridges too." So Dominique had, with the partridges, the plate, which was of gold.

A Philadelphia paper published the following paragraph :

An enamored Philadelphian has been convicted of petty larceny for abstracting his adored one's carte de visite from her photograph album; the Judge decided that to steal a "carte" was as bad as to steal a horse.

A contemporary made use of it as follows, being careful, of course, to leave out the pun :

A Philadelphia Judge decides that stealing a girl's photograph from her album is as bad as stealing a horse from a barn.

Here is an interesting piece of local information from Newburg :

One of our most thickly inhabited streets has had a case of varioloid.

A contemporary in reproducing this blunder says seriously enough :

Such news should make other localities careful about vaccination.

In a recent number of a fashionable morning paper there is a paragraph headed, "A Dangerous Cow," of which it is said not only that it tossed *several persons*, but that "it plunged and *tossed about the street* in a formidable manner."—MOON.

A story is told of an Englishman who landed at Dublin, filled with apprehension that the life of any loyal subject of her Majesty was not worth a farthing there and thereabouts. The Land Leaguers, he imagined, were all bloodthirsty assassins, and all that sort of thing. But it was his duty to travel in the land—a duty he approached with fear and trembling. Now there happened to be on his route a number of towns the names of which begin with the suggestive syllable "Kil." They were Kilmartin, and so on. In his ignorance of geographical nomenclature, his affrighted senses were startled anew on hearing a fellow passenger in a railway carriage remark to another as follows: "I'm just afther bein' over to Kilpatrick." "And I," replied the other, "am afther bein' over to Kilmarty." "What murderers they are!" thought the Englishman: "and to think that they talk of their assassinations so publicly!" But the conversation went on. "And phare are ye goin' now?" asked assassin No. 1. "I'm goin' home, and then to Kilmore," was No. 2's reply. The Englishman's blood curdled. "Kilmore, is it?" added No. 1. "You'd better be comin' along wud me to Kilmalle!" It is related that the Englishman left the train at the next station.

Constructions must be avoided that make it difficult to determine which of two parts of speech a word is, or what

relation it bears to the rest of the sentence. See pages cii, 414. Thus, on page 191, "dreams" may be either a verb or a noun. The ambiguity is removed by substituting "to dream," for "and dreams."

Care to avoid ambiguity from collocation must extend even to the possibility of mispronunciation.

Once when Edwin Forrest was playing "William Tell" in Boston, *Sarnem*, Gesler's lieutenant, should have remarked: "I see you love a jest, but jest not now." Imagine Forrest's feelings when that worthy declaimed: "I see you love a jest, but not jest now."

Lady (engaging footman): "You are clever at table?" James. "Yes, ma'am." Lady: "And you know your *way* to announce?" James: "Well, ma'am, I know my weight to a pound or so, but I hardly like to say to *an ounce*."—*Funny Folks*.

**Some special words** are so liable to produce ambiguity that they should be scrutinized in re-reading a composition.

*Any*, when not modified by a negative, means "any you like," i.e., "every;" but "not *any*," instead of meaning "not every" means "not a single one." Hence, when the negative is carelessly placed, *any* becomes ambiguous, because we cannot tell whether it means *every*, or *one*, e.g.:

No person shall derive any benefit from this rule who has not been engaged for at least five years to a house of business employing not less than a hundred clerks at *any* time.

This ought to mean, "employing at no time less than a hundred clerks;" but *any* in such cases is often confused with *some*. Again, in

I cannot believe *anything* you say,  
and

I cannot believe *anything* you choose to say,  
*anything* means, in the first case, "a single thing," in the second case "everything."

It is quite impossible to determine, without fuller context, the meaning of the word *any* in such a sentence as—

I am not bound to receive *any* messenger whom you may send.

*But* sometimes causes obscurity ; and since it may mean, according to the context, "except," or "on the other hand," or "only," must be very carefully handled.

As for the falsehood of your brother, I feel no doubt ; *but* what you say is true.

As for the falsehood of your brother, I feel no doubt *but* what you say is true.

I expected twelve ; *but* (either *only* or *contrary to my expectation*) ten came.

The following is perfectly clear, but shows the possibility of ambiguity :—

There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark

*But* he's an arrant knave.—*Hamlet*.—ABBOTT.

**Nothing less than** is another phrase susceptible of opposite interpretations. Thus,

He aimed at nothing less than the crown,

may denote either,

Nothing was less aimed at by him than the crown,

OR,

Nothing inferior to the crown could satisfy his ambition.

All such phrases ought to be totally laid aside.—CAMPBELL.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

### Precision.

#### 1. *The words employed*, p. 399.

Words may lack precision through :

##### a. The confounding of synonyms, p. 399.

An extensive vocabulary, p. 401.

The choice of words, p. 408.

##### b. The use of equivocal words, p. 409.

c. The use of general words, p. 410.

#### 2. *The construction*, p. 411.

##### a. Brevity, p. 411.

i. Omission of necessary words, p. 411.

ii. Use of ambiguous pronouns, p. 413.

- A genderless personal noun, p. 416.
- The use of "one," p. 417.
- Reflexive pronouns, p. 417.
- b.* Redundance, p. 418.
- c.* Affectation, p. 419.
  - Bombast, p. 421.
  - Affected humor, p. 425.
- d.* Looseness of thought, p. 425.
  - Carelessness, p. 426.
  - Collocation, p. 427.
  - Some special words, p. 431.
  - "Nothing less than," p. 432



## CHAPTER XXII.

### PERSPICUITY.

Out of the relations of thought and language, and the speaker to the hearer, grow three qualities of a good style. They are perspicuity, energy, and elegance. Perspicuity expresses the clearness of the thought to the perceptions of the hearer. Energy expresses the force of the thought to the sensibilities of the hearer. Elegance expresses the beauty of the thought to the taste of the hearer.—PHELPS.

PURITY, Propriety, and Precision are all absolute qualities. Perspicuity, Power, and Perfection are relative qualities, dependent upon the perception, the sensibilities, and the taste of the reader.

Precision demands that the sentence say what the writer means. Perspicuity demands, further, that it say what the writer means so clearly that the reader cannot mistake it.<sup>1</sup> Whether a given sentence is perspicuous depends upon who is to read it. Herbert Spencer's definition of evolution (see page 357) is precise, but it is perspicuous only to scientists. The fundamental requirement of perspicuity is adaptation to the audience addressed.

"I had remarked to him" [Coleridge], says Mr. De Quincey, "that the sophism, as it is usually called, but the difficulty, as it should be called, of Achilles and the Tortoise, which had puzzled all the sages of Greece, was, in fact, merely another form of the perplexity which besets decimal fractions; that, for example, if you threw  $\frac{1}{3}$  into a decimal form, it will never terminate, but be .666666, etc., *ad infinitum*. 'Yes,' Coleridge replied, 'the appar-

<sup>1</sup> Non ut intelligere possit, sed ne omnino possit non intelligere curandum.—QUINTILIAN.

ent absurdity in the Grecian problem arises thus,—because it assumes the infinite divisibility of space, but drops out of view the corresponding infinity of time.' There was a flash of lightning, which illuminated a darkness that had existed for twenty-three centuries."

Coleridge's explanation was precise; as addressed to De Quincey it was perspicuous; but had it been made to a class in a primary school it would have been decidedly obscure.

Universally, indeed, an unpractised writer is liable to be misled by his own knowledge of his own meaning into supposing those expressions clearly intelligible which are so to him, but which may not be so to the reader, whose thoughts are not in the same train. And hence it is that some do not write or speak with so much perspicuity on a subject which has long been very familiar to them, as on one which they understand indeed, but with which they are less intimately acquainted, and in which their knowledge has been more recently acquired. In the former case it is a matter of some difficulty to keep in mind the necessity of carefully and copiously explaining principles which by long habit have come to assume, in our minds, the appearance of self-evident truths. Utterly incorrect, therefore, is Blair's notion, that obscurity of style necessarily springs from indistinctness of conception. A little conversation on nautical affairs with sailors, or on agriculture with farmers, would soon have undeceived him.—*WHATLEY.*

A Government surveyor tells of a western pioneer who seemed interested in the theodolite. The surveyor explained its working, and found the pioneer so attentive that he went on to illustrate the variation of the needle, the magnetic currents, the precession of the equinoxes, and finally the calculation of coming eclipses, congratulating himself upon finding so intelligent a listener. After two hours of this, the pioneer for the first time broke silence. "It's wonderful, wonderful," he exclaimed. "And mebbe you can show me another thing that's always bothered me. Why is it that in adding up figures, you have to carry one for every ten?"

Teachers learn to measure the information they give not by what they tell their scholars, but by what their scholars tell back to them.

It is agreed among all writers upon rhetoric, that the first property in style is that by virtue of which it is intelligible. The understanding is the avenue to the man. No one is affected by truth who does not apprehend it. Discourse must, therefore, first of all, be plain. This property was termed *perspicuitas*, by the Latin rhetoricians. It is transparency in discourse, as the etymology denotes. The word *ἰσπεψεια*, which the Greek rhetoricians employed to mark this same characteristic, signifies distinctness of outline. The adjective *ἰσάπυς* is applied by Homer to the gods, when actually appearing to human vision in their own bright forms; when, like Apollo, they broke through the dim ether that ordinarily veiled them from mortal eyes, and stood out on the edge of the horizon distinctly defined, radiant, and splendid (Od. vii. 201, 2). Vividness seems to have been the ruling conception for the Greek, in this property of style, and transparency for the Latin. The English and French rhetoricians have transferred the Latin *perspicuitas*, to designate the quality of intelligibility in discourse. The Germans have not transferred the Latin word, because the remarkable flexibility of their language relieves them from the necessity of transferring words from other languages, but they have coined one (*Durchsichtigkeit*) in their own mint, which agrees in signification precisely with the Latin *perspicuitas*. These facts evince that the modern mind is inclined, with the Latin, to compare the property of intelligibility of style to a clear pellucid medium; to crystal or glass, that permits the rays of light to go through, and thus permits the human eye to see through.

While, however, the attention is fixed upon this conception of transparency, and the property under consideration is denominated perspicuity in the rhetorical nomenclature, it is important not to lose sight of that other conception of distinctness, or vividness, which was the leading one for the Greek mind. Style is not only a medium, it is also a form. It is not only translucent and transparent, like the undefined and all-pervading atmosphere; it also has definite outlines, like a single object. Style is not only clear, like the light; it is round like the sun. While, therefore, the conception of perspicuity of medium is retained, there should also be combined with it the conception of fulness of outline, and vividness of impression, so as to secure a comprehensive and all-including idea of that first fundamental quality of style which renders it intelligible.

It is not enough that thoughts be seen through a clear medium; they must be seen in a distinct shape. It is not enough that truth be visible in a clear, pure air; it must stand out in that air, a single, well-defined object. The atmosphere must not only be crystalline and sparkling, but the things in it must be bounded and defined by sharply cut lines. There may be perspicuity without distinctness, especially without that vivid distinctness which is implied in the Greek *ἰσπεψεια*. A style may be as transparent as water, and yet the thoughts be destitute of boldness and individuality. Such a style cannot be charged with obscurity, and yet it does not set truth before the mind of the reader or hearer in a striking or impressive manner. Mere isolated perspicuity is a negative quality; it furnishes a good medium of vision, but it does not present any distinct objects of vision. Distinctness of outline, on the other hand, is a positive quality. It implies a vigorous action of the mind upon the truth, whereby it is moulded and shaped: whereby it is cut and chiselled like a statue; whereby it is made to assume a substantial and well-defined form which smites upon the eye, and which the eye can take in.—SHREDD.

"Our language," says Quintilian, "ought to convey our meaning so clearly that the meaning shall fall on the hearers' minds as the sunlight falls on our eyes." But the sun-

shine of winter is cold and barren, although its radiance is brightened by the transparency of the air and the reflections of the ice and snow. The summer's sun has less brilliancy indeed, but far more heat - a heat that causes blue vapors to veil the distant hills and silver mists to wreath the green mountains, that gathers storm-clouds which darken the earth and sky and discharge such volleys of lightning as render that darkness all the more appalling.—**HERVEY.**

**Simplicity** is a prime essential to Perspicuity, and should be aimed at both (i) in Thought, and (ii) in Expression.

(1.) **Thought is Simple** when it is direct, straight, forward, intent solely on the truth concerned, and its clearest expression. (See pages 346, 347, 348.) Mozart gave as his reasons for marrying: "I wish to marry because I have no one to take care of my linen; because I cannot live like the dissolute men around me; and because I love Catharine Weber."

Cultivate simplicity, Coleridge; or rather, I should say, banish elaborateness; for simplicity springs spontaneous from the heart, and carries into daylight its own modest buds, and genuine, sweet, and clear flowers of expression. I allow no hot-beds in the gardens of Parnassus.—**C. LAMB.**

Youthful vanity and inexperience alone sufficiently account for the great part of the deviations from propriety, simplicity, and common sense now alluded to. Those who laud nature in opposition to art are too apt to forget that this very vanity forms a part of it. . . . While some men talk as if to speak naturally were to speak like a natural, others talk as if to speak with simplicity meant to speak like a simpleton. True simplicity does not consist in what is trite, bald, or commonplace. So far as regards the thought it means, not what is already obvious to everybody, but what, though not obvious, is immediately recognized, as soon as propounded, to be true and striking. As it regards the expression, it means that thoughts worth hearing are expressed in language that every one can understand. In the first point of view it is opposed to what is abstruse; in the second, to what is obscure.—**WHATELY.**

**1. Conceive** of things clearly and distinctly in their

own natures. 2. Conceive of things completely in all their parts. 3. Conceive of things comprehensively in all their properties and relations. 4. Conceive of things extensively in all their kinds. 5. Conceive of things orderly, or in a proper method.—WATTS.

I cannot conclude this lecture without insisting on the importance of accuracy of style as being near akin to veracity and truthful habits of mind; he who thinks loosely will write loosely.—COLERIDGE.

Propriety of thought and propriety of diction are commonly found together. Obscurity and affectation are the two greatest faults of style. Obscurity of expression generally springs from confusion of ideas; and the same wish to dazzle at any cost which produces affectation in the manner of a writer, is likely to produce sophistry in his reasonings.—MACAULAY.

One would indeed think it hardly possible that a man of sense who perfectly understandeth the language which he useth should ever speak or write in such a manner as to be altogether unintelligible. Yet this is what frequently happens. The cause of this fault in any writer I take to be always one or other of the three following: first, great confusion of thought, which is commonly accompanied with intricacy in the expression; secondly, affectation of excellence in the diction; thirdly, a total want of meaning. I do not mention as one of the causes of this imputation a penury of language; though this, doubtless, may contribute to produce it. In fact I never found one who had a justness of appreciation, and was free from affectation, at a loss to make himself understood in his native tongue, even though he had little command of language, and made but a bad choice of words.—CAMPBELL.

**Titles** often mislead through affectation of quaintness.

Unfortunately, writers are not careful in their choice of names, and titles are occasionally adopted which, instead of explaining the nature of the book, serve only to mislead the buyer. Mr. Ruskin, who is noted for such unintelligible titles as "Fors Clavigera" and "Sesame and Lilies," issued a theological discourse under the name of "A Treatise on Sheepfolds," thus leading astray many librarians and indexers, as well as unsuspecting farmers and shepherds. The "Divisions of Purley," at the time of its publication, was ordered by a village book-club under the impression that it was a book of amusing games. The "Essay on Irish Bulls" was another work which was thought by some folks to deal with live

stock. "Moths," a novel by Ouida, has been asked for under the impression that it was an entomological work, and Charles Kingsley's "Yeast," by those in search of information on the *Torula cerevisia*, or yeast-plant. Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" was sold largely to seafaring men, who concluded from the name that it had some relation to nautical matters. Coleridge himself says:

It is somewhat singular that the name of another and larger book of Mr. Wordsworth's should also owe its circulation to a misconception of the title. It has been my fortune to have met with "The Excursion" at a great number of inns and boarding-houses in picturesque scenes—in places where parties go for excursions; and upon inquiry how it happened that so expensive a book was purchased, when an old *Universal Magazine*, an "Athenian Oracle," or, at best, one of the "Bridgewater Treatises," would do as well to send the guests to sleep—I was given to understand in those separate places that they were left by parties who had finished their material excursion, but, alas for their taste, had left their poetic "Excursion" untouched—uncut, even, beyond the story of "Margaret."—*Chambers's Journal*.

(ii.) **Expression is Simple** when it expresses the thought in the most direct and obvious words. "Think with the learned, speak with the vulgar," says Bacon.

"There are six little ones who call General Grant 'grandpa,'" was a recent newspaper paragraph. This was in the first place untrue, the counting of the grandchildren having been suggested by the birth of the sixth, who at this time did not call anybody anything. But on general principles the paragraph would be more perspicuous and more forcible if it read simply, "General Grant has six grandchildren."

The whole merit of violent deviations from common style depends upon their rarity, and nothing does for ten pages together but the indicative mood.—SYDNEY SMITH.

If you take Sophocles, Catullus, Lucretius, and the better parts of Cicero, and so on, you may, with just two or three exceptions, arising out of the different idioms as to cases, translate page after page into good mother English, word by word, without altering the order; but you cannot do so with Virgil or Tibullus. If you attempt it you will make nonsense.—COLERIDGE.

The writings of Addison and Dr. Johnson have often been compared. One of the chief points of contrast in their style lies, I

apprehend, in the easy and natural recurrence in the former of the verb, and the artificial preponderance given in the latter to the noun. Since Dr. Johnson's time the substantive has been gaining ground; the infinitive mood, the gerund, and the compound participle have been in the same proportion suppressed in many works of which the composition is highly elaborate. As far as unstudied writings can be expressed in set phrases, the usurpation has extended even to these.—HALL.

Dr. Allen was preaching one day in Tennessee, when an old Methodist African came to him after the sermon, and said, "I like to hear you preach, for I understand your preaching." Dr. Allen replied, "I am glad of it." "But I understand every word you say." "I hope so," said the clergyman, "for I try to make myself understood." Again the man came to the charge. "Yes," he said, "I understand you jes' as well as if you was a nigger."

**Periodic Structure** of sentences often makes the meaning clearer, but when habitual or excessive becomes tedious.

The period is a structure in which the completion of the sense is suspended till the close. The ancient rhetoricians compared it to a sling, from which the stone is ejected after many circuits. A loose sentence is one in which the end might grammatically occur before the close. Such a sentence is a chain, from which a link may be dropped from the end, and it will still be a chain, and will have an end. The periodic structure is a glass ball; to part with a fragment of it is to ruin the whole.—PHELPS.

All of these are instances also of perfect antithesis without period; for each of these sentences might grammatically be concluded in the middle. So also, "It is (indeed) a just maxim that honesty is the best policy; but he who is governed by that maxim is not an honest man." This antithetical sentence is or is not a period, according as the word "indeed" is inserted or omitted.—WHEATELY.

John Morley, in writing of Cobden's style, says that classical training is more aptly calculated to destroy the qualities of good writing and fine speaking than any other system that could have been contrived. He refers to the excessive use of the periodic structure; but much as the

period is to be condemned where the meaning might as well have been expressed by short sentences, it is indispensable to perspicuity when the thought is complex.

The following is an example of the *period* :—

*Compelled* by want to attendance and solicitation, and *so* much versed in common life, *that* he has transmitted to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, Erasmus JOINED to his knowledge of the world *such* application to books, *that* he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes.

The words on which the thread of the sentence is suspended are printed in *italics*. The introductory clauses, “*Compelled . . . age,*” are obviously attributive, and lead us to expect a subject to which they relate. We find that subject in “*Erasmus.*” The latter part of the sentence is held together by the correlative particles “*such*” and “*that.*”

The following illustrates the *loose* construction :—

It is in vain to say that the portraits *which* exist of this remarkable woman are not like each other; for, amidst their discrepancy, each possesses general features *which* the eye at once acknowledges as peculiar to the vision, *which* our imagination has raised, *while* we read her history for the first time, and *which* has been impressed upon it by the numerous prints and pictures *which* we have seen.

This sentence is not only loose, but viciously so. In the second member of it, the main assertion ends with “*features.*” To this word, two of the remaining clauses are clumsily attached by “*which,*” and each of these has another “*which*” clause attached to it, one of them being still further prolonged by the clause beginning with “*while.*”

Re-write this sentence in periodic form.

**Parentheses** should be avoided except when they express a thought more completely without clogging it. For many illustrations, see pages 271–274.

Some critics have been so strongly persuaded of the bad effects of parentheses on perspicuity as to think they ought to be discarded altogether. But this I imagine is also an extreme. If the parenthesis be short, and if it be introduced in a proper place, it will not in the least hurt the clearness, and may add both to the vivacity and to the energy of the sentence.—CAMPBELL.



"I SAY."—A very bad sentence this ; into which, by the help of a parenthesis and other interjected circumstances, his lordship has contrived to thrust so many things that he is forced to begin the construction again with the phrase *I say*, which, whenever it occurs, may be always assumed as a sure mark of a clumsily ill-constructed sentence ; excusable in speaking, where the greatest accuracy is not expected, but in polished writing unpardonable.—BLAIR.

**Excessive Simplicity** seems at first an impossibility, but there are certain considerations worthy of attention.

(a) *Simplicity must not be Affected.*—Simple language is to be chosen, not because it is simple, but because it best expresses the meaning. To assume unnatural simplicity under the impression that simplicity in itself is an ornament, and because it is thought to be an ornament, is more ridiculous than the affectation of elegance.

OBSERVATIONS should not be proposed in scholastic style, nor in commonplace guise. They should be seasoned with a sweetness and urbanity, accommodated to the capacities of the people, and adapted to the manners of good men. One of the best expedients for this purpose is a reduction of obscure matters to a natural, popular, modern air. You can never attain this ability unless you acquire a habit of conceiving clearly of subjects yourself, and of expressing them in a free, familiar, easy manner, remote from everything forced and far-fetched. All long trains of arguments, all embarrassments of divisions and subdivisions, all metaphysical investigations, which are mostly impertinent, and, like the fields, the cities, and the houses which we imagine in the clouds, the mere creatures of fancy—all these should be avoided.

Care must be taken, however, to avoid the opposite extreme, which consists in making only poor, dry, spiritless observations, frequently said under pretence of avoiding school-divinity, and of speaking only popular things. Endeavor to think clearly, and try also to think nobly. Let your observations be replete with beauty as well as propriety, the fruits of a fine fancy under the

direction of a sober judgment. If you be inattentive to this article, you will pass for a contemptible declaimer, of mean and shallow capacity, exhausting yourself and not edifying your hearers; a very ridiculous character.—CLAUDE.

Wordsworth's weak side, as a poet, was his great difficulty in perceiving when he had and when he had not succeeded in fusing the language which he used with the fire of his own meditative passion. Sometimes in the midst of a passage of the truest rapture, he will descend suddenly upon a little bit of dry, hard fact, and not be at all aware that the fact remains like an irregular, unlovely stone pressing down a group of flowers, a monument of the sudden failure of the power of his emotion over his language. Thus, in the lovely lines, "She was a phantom of delight," the reader is suddenly oppressed by being told that the poet at last sees, "with eye serene, the very pulse of the machine,"—as if a phantom of delight could possibly have been a machine, or even, like a waxwork figure, contained one. There is the same fault in one of the finest of the original "Lyrical Ballads,"—the one called "The Thorn," of which Mrs. Oliphant, by the way, who does not seem to have written with a copy of the "Lyrical Ballads" before her, makes no mention, but which Lord Jeffrey epitomized, if we remember rightly, as describing how a woman in a red cloak went up to the top of a hill and said, "Oh, misery!" and then came down again. The greater part of the ballad, Lord Jeffrey "to the contrary in anywise notwithstanding," as the lawyers say, is penetrated through and through by the most genuine imaginative passion; but when, in the form in which the poem originally appeared, Wordsworth specified the dimensions of the little muddy pool by the infant's grave—

I've measured it from side to side;

'Tis three feet long and two feet wide,

he suddenly precipitated, as it were, into the midst of his poem a little deposit of ugly clay, which made his readers change the sob which the finer parts of the ballad excited into a hysterical giggle. Wordsworth's weakness—especially in the earlier part of his career as a poet—was this, that he never knew how far his imagination had transmuted, or had failed to transmute, the rough clay of rude circumstances into the material of plastic art. He was not awakened from his dream by such a descent as we have just quoted, and he did not know that his readers, who did not fully enter into his ecstasy, and probably did see, what Wordsworth could not see, the ludicrous contrasts and inequalities of his mood, would be awakened from their dream by these shocks.—*The Spectator*.

(b) *Simplicity must never seem a Condescension.*—Not men alone, but children as well, resent the imputation that it is necessary to adapt one's thoughts and vocabulary to their ignorance.

It is a just and curious observation of Dr. Kenrick that "the case of languages, or rather speech, being quite contrary to that of science, in the former the ignorant understand the learned better than the learned do the ignorant, in the latter it is otherwise."—CAMPBELL.

The style of a sermon may, like the stars, be at once very clear and very lofty; while the peasant derives from the stars rules for farming and the mariner for sailing, the mathematician equally draws thence the principles that guide him in his astronomical calculations. The former, unable, it may be, either to read or write, can nevertheless apprehend the stars as far as is necessary for him; the latter, in spite of all his scientific knowledge, is very far from comprehending all the stellar universe.—ANTONIO VIERA.

So far as it is meant to gain favor by patronizing, simplicity, like other affectations, fails of its end; for there is in ignorant minds a not wholly unreasonable fondness for thoughts they have to grope after. Part of Rufus Choate's power over juries lay in the delicious indefiniteness of his style, which made the unlearned feel there was much to admire, and would be much to convince if they could only understand it.

It must be accepted as a fact (and we commend it to the attention of those who cherish romantic notions of human nature), that the more weak and ignorant men are, the less inclined they are to receive instruction, unless it is in some wise concealed, or made to pass under another name. In proof of this we need only mention the incessant return of the phrase "you know" in talk and correspondence.—HERVEY.

A clergyman in the country had a stranger preaching for him one day, and meeting his sexton asked, "Well, Saunders, how did you like the sermon to-day?" "It was rather ower plain and simple for me. I like thae sermons best that jumbles the joojgment and confounds the sense. Ah, sir, I never saw one that could come up to yoursell' at that."

The ultra-practical Francis de Sales, after hearing from another in his own pulpit a sublime sermon that greatly delighted his mountaineers, asked some of them what they had gained from it. One of them replied: "This preacher teaches us to esteem more highly the grandeur of the mysteries of our religion." De Sales

was forced to admit that this man, at least, had profited by the sermon.

Richard Baxter, no mean example for religious teachers and catechisers, purposely threw out some things in his sermons that were beyond the comprehension of his hearers, in order that they might learn to be dissatisfied with their existing stock of Christian knowledge. "Wherefore," says Chrysostom in one of his homilies, "have I presented this difficulty and not appended its solution?" He replies that herein he proceeds like doves, which, as long as their young remain in the nest, feed them from their own bills; but as soon as they are fledged and leave the nest, the mother lets food fall upon the earth, and the little ones pick it up.—**HERVEY.**

The more simple, clear, and obvious any principle is rendered, the more likely is its exposition to elicit these common remarks: "Of course! of course! no one could ever doubt that; this is all very true, but there is nothing new brought to light; nothing that was not familiar to every one; there needs no ghost to tell us that." I am convinced that a verbose, mystical, and partially obscure way of writing on such a subject is the most likely to catch the attention of the multitude. The generality verify the observation of Tacitus, *omne ignotum pro magifico*, and when anything is made very plain to them are apt to fancy that they know it already.—**COLERIDGE.**

**SIMPLICITY vs. TRITENESS.**—If you entertain your reader solely or chiefly with thoughts that are either trite or obvious, you cannot fail to tire him. You introduce few or no new sentiments into his mind, you give him little or no information, and consequently afford neither exercise to his reason nor entertainment to his fancy. In what we read and what we hear, we always seek for something in one respect or other new, which we did not know, or at least attend to before. The less we find of this, the sooner we are tired. Such a trifling minuteness, therefore, in narration, description, or argument, as an ordinary apprehension would render superfluous, is apt quickly to disgust us. The reason is, not because anything is said too perspicuously, but because many things are said which ought not to be said at all. Nay, if those very things had been expressed obscurely (and the most obvious things may be expressed obscurely), the fault would have been much greater; because it would have required a good deal of attention to discover what, after we had discovered it, we should perceive not to be of sufficient value for requiring our pains. To

an author of this kind we should be apt to apply the character which *Bassanio* in the play gives of *Gratiano's* conversation :

He speaks an infinite deal of nothing. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff : you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them they are not worth the search.—*Merchants of Venice*.

It is therefore futility in the thought, and not perspicuity in the language, which is the fault of such performances. There is as little hazard that a piece shall be faulty in this respect, as that a mirror shall be too faithful in reflecting the images of objects, or that the glasses of a telescope shall be too transparent.

At the same time it is not to be dissembled that with inattentive readers, a pretty numerous class, darkness frequently passes for depth. To be perspicuous, on the contrary, and to be superficial, are regarded by them as synonymous. But it is not surely to their absurd notions that our language ought to be adapted.—  
CAMPBELL.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### **Perspicuity.**

#### **Simplicity essential to perspicuity, p. 437.**

##### *i. Simplicity in thought, p. 437.*

1. Things should be conceived clearly, 437.
2. " " " completely, p. 438.
3. " " " comprehensively, p. 438.
4. " " " extensively, p. 438.
5. " " " orderly, p. 438.

##### *Titles, p. 438.*

##### *ii. Simplicity in expression, p. 439.*

Periodic structure, p. 440.

Parentheses, p. 441.

Excessive simplicity, 442.

*a.* Simplicity must not be affected, p. 442.

*b.* " " must never seem a condescension, p. 443.

Simplicity *vs.* Triteness, p. 445.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### POWER.

**Power** (often known as Energy, Strength, Force) is that quality of style which makes it impressive. Precision and Perspicuity make the reader know what is meant; Power makes him feel what is meant. Precision and Perspicuity make the hearer know what he ought to do; Power makes him resolve to do it.

These words, which have their synonyms in all language—energy, strength, force, vigor—do certainly express an idea not otherwise definable than by interchange of these words. They convey an idea which the common sense of men never confounds with the impressiveness of a mathematical theorem, or that of a bird of paradise, or that of the tail of a peacock. These words are ultimate in all languages; so that we cannot add to their significance, except by material emblems. We can only say that energy is a peculiar kind of impressiveness; it is the impressiveness of strength, as distinct from that of clearness; it is the impressiveness of force, as distinct from that of beauty; it is the impressiveness of vigor, as distinct from that of vivacity.—**PHILIPS.**

(1.) **In Thought**, Power is dependent chiefly upon (a) Sincerity, and (b) Directness.

(a) **Sincerity** combines reality of conviction, and earnestness of purpose, with freedom from unfairness and from dishonesty. The Latin original meant "without wax," and was applied to honey that was just what it purported to be. In speech we apply the word when one

says what he means, and means what he says. Such utterance always commands respect, and usually commands attention. Without it, words are as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

Conviction is more than opinion ; it is firm belief, attained by consideration, and fortified by experience. One who holds only opinions—vague, shifting, embodying little thought or observation—will write nothing forcible, because he has no vigorous ideas. So true is this that in the lightest conversation (see pages 27, 76) one must take sides temporarily even upon subjects that are indifferent, or the talk will be platitudinous. In conversation this is sometimes excusable and even necessary, because the range of practical topics may include none upon which both persons have pronounced opinions. Sometimes in periodical newspaper work the same necessity arises ; the editor must say something about a subject that has no interest for him, because his readers expect something said about it. But if such occasions are frequent, the editor may be sure that he has mistaken either his calling or his community ; he cannot long assume an interest he does not feel, and he will find no readers for articles he has written without an interest. The exceptions are rare to the rule that the essay should be written because one has a conviction to express. A conviction hastily and artificially built up because one has an essay to write will fall flat.

(b) **Directness** characterizes a strong mind. To see clearly, to feel deeply, to speak forcibly, the mind must be fixed on one thing, and one thing only. A dozen arguments, a score of illustrations, a hundred facts may be cited, but all must be subordinated to the one end in view—selected because they promote it, and arranged with reference to the perspective (see page 251).

These are ascending stairs—a good voice, winning manners, plain speech, chastened however by the schools into correctness ; but we must come to the main matters, of power of statement—know your fact, hug your fact.—EMERSON.



**(2) In Expression.** Precision and perspicuity being assumed, power is dependent chiefly on (*a*) plainness, and (*b*) conciseness.

**(a) Plainness** of speech indicates that the writer has something to say, and that his reliance is upon the ideas themselves—not upon their verbal apparel.

The first valuable power in a reasonable mind, one would say, was the power of plain statement, or the power to receive things as they befall, and to transfer the picture of them to another mind unaltered. 'Tis a good rule of rhetoric which Schlegel gives—"In good prose every word is underscored;" which, I suppose, means never italicize. Spartans, Stoics, heroes, saints, and gods use a short and positive speech. They are never off their centres. As soon as they swell and pant and find truth not enough for them, softening of the brain has already begun. It seems as if inflation were a disease incident to too much use of words; and the remedy lay in recourse to things. I am daily struck with the forcible understatement of people who have no literary habits. The low expression is strong and agreeable. The citizen dwells in delusions. His dress and draperies, house and stables, occupy him. The poor countryman, having no circumstances of carpets, coaches, dinners, wine and dancing in head to confuse him, is able to look straight at you, without refraction or prismatic glories, and he sees whether your head is addled by this mixture of wines. The common people diminish; "a cold snap;" "it rains easy;" "good haying weather." When a farmer means to tell you that he is doing well with his farm, he says: "I don't work as hard as I did, and I don't mean to." When he wishes to condemn any treatment of soils or stock, he says: "It won't do any good." Under the Catskill mountains the boy in the steamboat said, "Come up here, Tony; it looks pretty out-of-doors."—EMERSON.

"I don't know how to apologize," Max Adeler makes a ragamuffin who is ashamed of himself exclaim; "but if you want to kick me down the front steps, just kick away—I'll bear it like an angel."

Even a sophisticated mind is caught by plain utterances. The man who has spoiled his tastes and sympathies by an artificial and

showy cultivation is nevertheless struck by the vigor and raciness of plain sense. In the phrase of Horace, though he has driven nature out of his understanding with a fork, she yet returns when truth appears. And this is a hold which a plain speaker has upon an audience of false tastes and false refinement. There is an instinctive sagacity in man which needs this plainness of presentation, and which craves it and is satisfied with it.—**SHEDD.**

Coleridge says of Roger North :

His language gives us the very nerve, pulse, and sinew, of a hearty, healthy, conversational English ;

and he gives this illustration of his style :

He appeared very ambitious to learn to write ; and one of the attorneys got a board knocked up at a window, on the top of a staircase ; and that was his desk, where he sat and wrote after copies of court and other hands that the clerks gave him.

On the title-page to "Put Yourself in his Place," Charles Reade thus translates a famous sentence of Horace's :

I will frame a work of fiction upon notorious fact, so that anybody shall think he can do the same ; shall labor and toil, attempting the same, and fail—such is the power of sequence and connection in writing.

**Bluntness** is a degree of plainness sometimes permissible, and always forcible where it does not suggest impropriety.

Grand, rough old Martin Luther  
Bloomed fables, flowers on furze :  
The better the uncouth :  
Do roses stick like burrs ?—**BROWNING.**

Some people are so affected in their delicacy, that their ears appear to be the nicest part about them.—**FIELDING.**

I have said that the popular craving for exact utterance of truth is often excessive. Men crave a coarse precision, a savage form of truth. Yet it is the truth after all. The common mind will not long retain a label of a distinguished contemporary if it is not true. Popular slang, in such cases, though etymologically loose, is commonly definite to the popular ear, and substantially exact. No language is more so. Thus, when a prince has proved himself bold, quick, decisive, ponderous in character, the popular voice has summed up its verdict in one figurative but exact title, "Charles the Hammer." When a military chief has proved him-

self sanguinary, cruel, ferocious, relentless, the people have told the whole story of his life in the single phrase, "Alva the Butcher."

The watchwords of political parties again illustrate the same thing. They are often intensely figurative; yet, if they have great force with the people, they are as intensely true. No style can express the truth with more of that vividness which is often necessary to precise ideas in the popular mind. General Harrison owed his elevation to the presidency of our republic, in large measure to his supposed sympathy with the simple and rude usages of backwoodsmen; and this was expressed in the old war-cry of the Whigs of 1840: "Log cabin and hard cider." General Taylor owed his election to the same office largely to the sobriquet which his soldiers gave him in the Mexican war, "Old Rough and Ready." General Scott was believed to have lost his election because of the nickname by which his enemies ridiculed his well-known fondness for military etiquette, "Old Fuss and Feathers." Thousands of voters who cared nothing, and knew nothing, about the politics of the contending parties, knew as definitely as you do what those watchwords meant; and they voted for and against the things which these words painted to their mental vision. A style in which men said what they meant, and meant what they believed, carried the day, although it was made up of popular slang.—PHELPS.

Find illustrations on pages 57, 71, 265.

**Coarseness**, however, enfeebles; for it produces disgust with the writer, which prejudices the reader against the views presented.

"You Scotchmen," said Edward Irving to Chalmers, "would handle an idea as a butcher handles an ox."

It has generally happened that the most effective public speakers, whether secular or sacred, have by a fastidious class been accused of vulgarisms. So with Cicero, Burke, and Chatham; so with Patrick Henry and Daniel Webster; and to turn to eminent preachers, so with Luther, Latimer, and Whitefield. The reason was that, intent on the greatest good to the greatest number, they used what Dr. Johnson, after Daniel Burgess, called "market language." And yet some carry this notion so far that they imag-

ine that in speech the more vulgar they are the more energetic they must be. "Nor is it true," as Dr. Ward says, "that rough and harsh language is more strong and nervous than when the composition is smooth and harmonious. A stream which runs among stones and rocks makes more noise, from the opposition it meets with in its course; but that which has not these impediments flows with greater force and strength."—HERVEY.

In criticising, we must keep in mind how the standard of propriety has varied, from age to age.

The Rev. Joseph Dwight was the minister of Woodstock, Conn., about the year 1700. The sensational pulpit of our own time could hardly surpass him in the drollery of its expressions. "If unconverted men ever get to heaven," he said: "they would feel as uneasy as a shad up the crotch of a white-oak." This probably seemed less offensive to his congregation than it seemed not long ago, at a prayer-meeting, when Henry Ward Beecher told about certain cellars from which malarial odors arose, and said that first one of the family died and then another from these odors. "They called it mysterious Providence," said Mr. Beecher. "No such thing; God knows it was rotten onions."

In the use of words, again, local usage must be recognized. "Do taste this soup," said an English young woman to the man beside her at dinner; "it isn't half nasty." The remark was unnoticed there, but would have been unpardonable at a Boston table. Mr. Lowell insists that "perspire" is a vulgar word, and that only "sweat" should be used. Yet in most American circles one does well to remember the distinction that a horse sweats, a man perspires, and a woman glows. The young man who began a letter to his betrothed, "Thou sweatest," found her no longer sweet to him.

Those things which it is indecent to express vividly are always such as are conceived to have some turpitude in them, either natural or moral. An example of this decency in expression, where

the subject hath some natural turpitude, you will find in Martha's answer, as it is in the original, when our Saviour gave orders to remove the stone from the sepulchre of her brother Lazarus, "Lord, by this time he smelleth (*ἴσθη ὀσφεί*), for he hath been dead four days." In our version it is somewhat indelicately, not to say indecently, rendered stinketh. Our translators have in this instance unnecessarily receded from their ordinary rule of keeping as close as possible to the letter. The synecdoche in this place answers just as well in English as in Greek; the perspicuity is such as secures the reader from the possibility of a mistake, at the same time that the expression is free from the indecency with which the other is chargeable. But if it be necessary to avoid a vivid exhibition of what appears uncleanly to the external senses, it is much more necessary in whatever may have a tendency to pollute the mind. It is not always the mention of vice, as such, which has this tendency. Many of the atrocious crimes may be mentioned with great plainness without any such danger, and therefore without the smallest indecorum. What the subjects are which are in this way dangerous, it is surely needless to explain. And as every person of sense will readily conceive the truth of the general sentiment, to propose without necessity to produce examples for the elucidation of it, might justly be charged with being a breach of that decency of which I am treating.—CAMPBELL.

**The Distinction** between bluntness and coarseness is that the former is recognized by the writer as harsh, but adopted because harshness seems, under the circumstances, to be necessary; while the latter is the unconscious manifestation of low instinct and low taste.

Thus in rhythm what would if unconscious be an unpardonable blunder, may, when a certain effect is to be produced, appear an artist-stroke. For instance,

— And ten slow words oft creep in one dull line,

is a most unmusical verse, and perfect because it is unmusical, being intended to illustrate that fault. But there would be no hope for the writer who let such verses slip into his poems without knowing that they were unmusical.

So true is it that only the necessity of such utterance makes bluntness permissible, that the severest remark gains force when it can be converted without loss of distinctness into courteous expression. The edge of the axe does more execution than the head. Take the illustration at the foot of page 264. There would be a certain blunt force in saying: "You never did a good deed in your life, while your crimes are notorious." But how much deeper the accusation sinks when it is put thus:

You have done good, my lord, by stealth;  
The rest is upon record.

**The Velvet Glove.**—In fact, we are particularly grateful to a speaker whose tact relieves us from an anticipated necessity of hearing something disagreeable. We want the presumptuous punished, but we shrink from the altercation that results when he is met with his own weapons. When an antagonist arises, not only bold enough to attack him, but skilful enough to disarm him without giving him opportunity to strike back, we put no stint upon our admiration. The iron hand within a velvet glove is the ideal protector of society.

Leigh Hunt's sensitive delicacy was one of his most marked characteristics, and one that peculiarly impressed itself on those who enjoyed personal communion with him. He was delicate as a woman in conduct, in words, in ways of thinking. I have heard him use paraphrase in speaking of things that the generality of men are accustomed to mention plainly, as a matter of course; and though he could—on occasion—use very straightforward terms in treating a poetical subject warmly, or in reprobating a vice sternly, and employ very playful terms when treating a humorous subject wittily, I never heard him utter a coarse or a light word in the many times I have heard him converse with freedom among intimate friends. Airy elegance, sportive fancy, marked his lively talk; levity never. But though Leigh Hunt was almost womanly in his scrupulous delicacy, he had not the very least touch of effeminacy in his composition. He was essentially manly—of that fine type of manliness which includes the best

gentleness and tenderness of womanly nature, blended with the highest moral fortitude of manhood. We know that the man who created *Imogen, Portia, Viola, Rosalind, Hamlet, Romeo, Troilus, Othello*, comprised this dual womanly and manly nature in his own; and we know that Nelson, who knew not what fear was, desired when dying to have a kiss from the lips of his faithful lieutenant, Hardy. So with Leigh Hunt: he was sensitive as a woman, yet in every fibre—moral, intellectual, and physical—thoroughly a man.—MARY COWDEN CLARKE.

Find illustrations on pages 11, 60. See also pages 29, 39-43.

(b) **Conciseness** is not synonymous with Brevity. Brevity refers only to the number of words; conciseness refers to the amount of thought they convey. Brevity implies the use of few words, whatever the thought may be; conciseness implies the use of no unnecessary words, however many may be employed. Brevity may be attained by leaving much unsaid; conciseness tells it all, but tells it compactly.

A concise discourse is like a well-packed trunk, which contains much more than at first sight it appears to do; a brief discourse may be like a trunk half full; short, because it is scanty.—WHATELY.

A strict and succinct style is that where you can take away nothing without losse, and that losse to be manifest.—BEN JONSON.

Brevity is a means, not an end; it is to be desired when it gives best expression to the thought, and only then. To assume that there is a special virtue in laconism is to imitate the absurdity of Dryden's line,

My wound is great, because it is so small;

which Buckingham thus parodied,

It would be greater, were it none at all.

Conciseness is attained chiefly (i) by Pruning, and (ii) by Compression.

(i.) **Pruning** is possible in almost all composition to an extent that will amaze those who have not experimented. Not to speak of words like *very* (see page 227) that young writers sprinkle through their manuscript as from a pepper-box, phrase after phrase, clause after clause, sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph, will be found superfluous because they repeat, or excrement because they are not a growth from the idea.

“The three ends which a statesman ought to propose to himself in the government of a nation,” says Coleridge, “are Security to possessors, Facility to acquirers, and Hope to all.” Why this last clause? It is not co-ordinate with the other two, but a result from them. It is not one of three ends, but the single end, to be attained by means of the other two.

The Declaration of Independence is a famous document, but it begins with a similar blunder:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Life? yes; liberty? yes; but the pursuit of happiness? Why is it an inalienable right? How can you prevent a man from “pursuing” happiness? You may help him to attain it, but how can you help him to “pursue” it?

The fact is, that in nearly half of the instances where three specifications are made, one of them is either superfluous or excrement. It is a sort of rhetorical rhythm to which mankind has become accustomed, that three specifications give a sounding roundness to the close of a sentence; so when only two are involved in the thought a third is tacked on for the sake of completeness.

**Economy of Attention** is the principle upon which the power of conciseness depends. This is a busy age. People are overwhelmed on all sides with things to see and to hear. Any one thing that absorbs attention abstracts that attention from a thousand pressing objects, and must prove itself of more immediate importance than



those objects. Hence the idea must be presented with as few wrappings as possible. The busy merchant will not stop to tear open a series of envelopes to get at a circular from an unknown correspondent—envelopes and all will go into the waste-basket.

We are told that "brevity is the soul of wit." We hear styles condemned as verbose or involved. Blair says that every needless part of a sentence "interrupts the description and clogs the image;" and again, that "long sentences fatigue the reader's attention." It is remarked by Lord Kames that "to give the utmost force to a period, it ought, if possible, to be closed with the word that makes the greatest figure." That parentheses should be avoided, and that Saxon words should be used in preference to those of Latin origin, are established precepts. But, however influential the truths thus dogmatically embodied, they would be much more influential if reduced to something like scientific ordination. In this, as in other cases, conviction will be greatly strengthened when we understand the *why*. And we may be sure that a comprehension of the general principle from which the rules of composition result, will not only bring them home to us with greater force, but will discover to us other rules of like origin.

On seeking for some clue to the law underlying these current maxims, we may see shadowed forth in many of them the importance of economizing the reader's or hearer's attention. To so present ideas that they may be apprehended with the least possible mental effort, is the desideratum toward which most of the rules above quoted point. When we condemn writing that is wordy, or confused, or intricate—when we praise this style as easy, and blame that as fatiguing, we consciously or unconsciously assume this desideratum as our standard of judgment. Regarding language as an apparatus of symbols for the conveyance of thought, we may say that, as in a mechanical apparatus, the more simple and the better arranged in its parts, the greater will be the effect produced. In either case, whatever force is absorbed by the machine is deducted from the result. A reader or listener has at each moment but a limited amount of mental power available. To recognize and in-

terpret the symbols presented to him requires part of this power ; to arrange and combine the images suggested requires a further part ; and only that part which remains can be used for realizing the thought conveyed. Hence, the more time and attention it takes to receive and understand each sentence, the less time and attention can be given to the contained idea, and the less vividly will that idea be conceived.

How truly language must be regarded as a hindrance to thought, though the necessary instrument of it, we shall clearly perceive on remembering the comparative force with which simple ideas are communicated by signs. To say "Leave the room" is less expressive than to point to the door. Placing a finger on the lips is more forcible than whispering "Do not speak." A beck of the hand is better than "Come here." No phrase can convey the idea of surprise so vividly as opening the eyes and raising the eyebrows. A shrug of the shoulders would lose much by translation into words.\* Again, it may be remarked that when oral language is employed, the strongest effects are produced by interjections, which condense entire sentences into syllables. And in other cases, where custom allows us to express thoughts by single words, as in *Beware*, *Heigho*, *Fudge*, much force would be lost by expanding them into specific propositions.

Hence, carrying out the metaphor that language is the vehicle of thought, there seems reason to think that in all cases the friction and inertia of the vehicle deduct from its efficiency, and that in composition, the chief, if not the sole thing to be done is to reduce this friction and inertia to the smallest possible amount.—  
HERBERT SPENCER.

The very same sentiment, expressed diffusely, will be admitted barely to be just ; expressed concisely will be admired as spirited. To recur to examples, the famous answer returned by the Countess of Dorset to the letter of Sir Joseph Williamson, Secretary of State to Charles the Second, nominating to her a member for the borough of Appleton, is an excellent illustration : "I have been bullied," says her ladyship, "by an usurper, I have been neglected

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\* "It wants that!" said Sir Joshua Reynolds of a picture, snapping his fingers. On the tomb of Sardanapalus is inscribed "Pass on, stranger, eat, drink, and amuse thyself, for nought else is worth a fillip," and a picture is given of fingers making the same sign.

by a court, but I will not be dictated to by a subject. Your man shan't stand."—CAMPBELL.

**PROLIXITY.**—There is an event recorded in the Bible which men who write books should keep constantly in remembrance. It is there set forth that many centuries ago the earth was covered by a great flood, by which the whole human race, with the exception of one family, were destroyed. It appears, also, that from thence a great alteration was made in the longevity of mankind, who, from a range of seven or eight hundred years, which they had enjoyed before the flood, were confined to their present period of seventy or eighty years. This epoch in the history of men gave birth to the twofold division of the antediluvian and postdiluvian style of writing, the latter of which naturally contracted itself into those inferior limits which were better accommodated to the abridged period of human life and literary labor.

Now to forget this event, to write without the fear of the deluge before his eyes, and to handle a subject as if mankind could lounge over a pamphlet for ten years, as before their submersion, is to be guilty of the most grievous error into which a writer can possibly fall. The author of this book should call in the aid of some brilliant pencil, and cause the distressing scenes of the deluge to be portrayed in the most lively colors for his use. He should gaze at Noah, and be brief. The ark should constantly remind him of the little time there is left for reading; and he should learn, as they did in the ark, to crowd a great deal of matter into a very small compass.—SYDNEY SMITH.

De Quincey calls the German sentence an arch between the rising and the setting sun, and declares that one of Kant's sentences was found by a carpenter to be twenty inches long.

Louis XIV., who loved a concise style, one day met a priest, whom he asked hastily: "Whence come you? Whither are you going? What do you want?" The priest replied, "From Bruges. To Paris. A benefice." "You shall have it," answered the king.

(ii.) **Compression.**—"One must study contraction as well as omission. There are many sentences which would not bear the omission of a single word consistently with perspicuity, which yet may be much more concisely expressed with equal clearness by the employment of different words, and by recasting a great part of the expression."

Take, for example, such a sentence as the following:

A severe and tyrannical exercise of power must become a matter of necessary policy with kings when their subjects are imbued with such principles as justify and authorize rebellion.

This sentence could not be advantageously nor to any considerable degree abridged by the mere omission of any of the words;

but it may be expressed in a much shorter compass, with equal clearness and far greater energy, thus :

Kings will be tyrants from policy when subjects are rebels from principle.—**CAMPBELL.**

**EXERCISE.**—Condense the following sentences by a change of form.

*Example.*—They disputed who should be greatest.

There arose a dispute among them, who should be greatest.

I have a doubt whether the story be true.

Generally a discussion arises whether a fee shall be paid.

I am going to yonder gate to receive further direction how I may get to the place of deliverance.

He gave us a long account how he had hooked the fish. We are indebted to him for the suggestion as to making an abstract.

Henry Smith failed, which astonished them. Conversation with you has satisfied me as to the fact.

I had often received an invitation from my friend.

If we know extensively, we shall operate extensively.

Being cultivated mentally is important.

The equality of the three angles of a triangle to two right angles is a previous assumption.

Of the same nature with the indulgence of domestic affections, and equally refreshing to the spirits, is the pleasure which results from acts of bounty and beneficence, exercised either in getting money or in imparting to those who want it the assistance of our skill and profession.—*Quoted by BAIN.*

**The Degree** of conciseness conducing to power depends largely upon the capacity of the class of readers addressed.

It is remarked by anatomists that the nutritive quality is not the only requisite in food ; that a certain degree of distention in the stomach is required to enable it to act with its full powers, and that for this reason hay or straw must be given to horses as well as corn, in order to supply the necessary bulk. Something analogous to this takes place with respect to the generality of minds, which are incapable of thoroughly digesting and assimilating

ing what is presented to them, however clearly, in a very small compass.

**Repetition** in a condensed form of an idea already expressed at length often produces the effect of conciseness.

To an author who is in his expression of any sentiment wavering between the demands of perspicuity and of energy (of which the former, of course, requires the first care, lest he should fail of both) and doubting whether the phrase which has the most of forcible brevity will be readily taken in, it may be recommended to use both expressions: first, to expand the sense sufficiently to be clearly understood, and then to contract it into the most compendious and striking form. This expedient might seem at first sight the most decidedly adverse to the brevity recommended; but it will be found in practice that the addition of a compressed and pithy expression of the sentiment which has been already stated at greater length will have the effect of brevity. For it is to be remembered that it is not on account of the actual number of words that diffuseness is to be condemned (unless one were limited to a certain space or time), but to avoid the flatness and tediousness resulting from it; so that if this appearance can be obviated by the insertion of such an abridged repetition as is here recommended, which adds poignancy and spirit to the whole, conciseness will be practically promoted by the addition.—**WHATELY.**

In the following sentence Archbishop Whately violates the principle just laid down, putting the compact expression first.

Universally, a writer or speaker should endeavor to maintain the appearance of expressing himself, not as if he wanted to say something, but as if he had something to say; *i. e.*, not as if he had a subject set him, and was anxious to compose the best essay or declamation on it that he could, but as if he had some ideas to which he was anxious to give utterance; not as if he wanted to compose (for instance) a sermon, and was desirous of performing that task satisfactorily, but as if there was something in his mind which he was desirous of communicating to his hearers.

**EXCEPTION** to the rule that conciseness is energy frequently occurs in description. (See pages 213, 250.)

Edmund Burke, in his speech on the Nabob of Arcot, describes the effects of the war carried on by the East India Company in the

Carnatic territory. An unimaginative speaker, seeing things in what Bacon calls "dry light," would have said, "The war was a war of extermination;" this was the whole of it. An indignant and diffusive speaker, boiling over with his wrath, would have said, "The war was murderous, inhuman, devilish." His invective would have spent itself in epithets. But Burke, more forcible than either, compresses his indignation, has not a word to say of the character of the war, but describes the facts, and leaves them to speak for themselves. He says:

When the British army traversed, as they did, the Carnatic for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march they did not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed beast of any description whatever.

Energy of thought here requires particularity of detail; therefore energy of expression requires many words.

Sometimes a descriptive speaker needs to gain time for a thought to take hold of an obtuse hearer. Macaulay says of the effects of the French Revolution, "Down went the old church of France, with all its pomp and wealth." This is forcible fact, forcibly put. But he intensifies it by saying, "The churches were closed; the bells were silent; the shrines were plundered; the silver crucifixes were melted down; buffoons dressed in surplices came dancing in the carmagnole even to the bar of the Convention." By these details time is gained for the imagination to realize the main truth that the church was destroyed. Longinus illustrates the two styles here contrasted by the examples of Demosthenes and Cicero. He says, "Demosthenes was concisely, Cicero diffusely sublime. Demosthenes was a thunderbolt; Cicero was a conflagration."—PHELPS.

## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### **Power.**

1. *In thought power depends on :*
  - a. Sincerity, p. 448.
  - b. Directness, p. 449.
2. *In expression power depends on :*
  - a. Plainness, p. 450.
    - Bluntness, p. 451.
    - Coarseness, p. 452.
    - Distinction between bluntness and coarseness, 454.
    - The velvet glove, p. 455.
  - b. Conciseness, p. 456.
    - i. Pruning, p. 457.
      - Economy of attention, p. 457.
    - ii. Compression, p. 460.
      - Degree of conciseness, p. 461.
      - Repetition, p. 462.
      - Exceptions, p. 462.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### PERFECTION.

**Perfection** (usually referred to as Elegance, Grace, Beauty) is the artistic finish put upon composition already elaborated. The essay being true, precise, perspicuous, powerful, the careful writer goes over it line by line, changing here a word, there an expression, until each word not only expresses his meaning but expresses it more happily than any other word could.

The safest rule is never during the act of composition to study elegance or think about it at all. Let an author study the best models, mark their beauties of style and dwell upon them, that he may insensibly catch the habit of expressing himself with elegance; and when he has completed any composition he may revise it, and cautiously alter any expression that is awkward and harsh, as well as those that are feeble and obscure; but let him never while writing think of any beauties of style, but content himself with such as may occur spontaneously. He should carefully study perspicuity as he goes along; he may also, though more cautiously, aim in like manner at energy; but if he is endeavoring after elegance, he will hardly fail to betray that endeavor; and in proportion as he does this, he will be so far from giving pleasure to good judges, that he will offend more than by the rudest simplicity.—**WHATELY.**

A man should so deliver himself to the nature of the subject whereof he speaks, that his hearer may take knowledge of his discipline with some delight: and so apparel fair and good matter that the studious of elegancy be not defrauded; redeem arts from their rough and braky seats, where they lay hid and overgrown with thorns, to a pure, open, and flowery light, where they may take the eye, and be taken by the hand.—**BEN JONSON.**



*A Change of Taste.*—Blair's "Rhetoric," founded upon the style of Addison as an ideal, treats of Beauty as characterizing writing of a certain kind. The author says :

I am, indeed, inclined to think, that regularity appears beautiful to us chiefly, if not only on account of its suggesting the ideas of fitness, propriety and use, which have always a greater connection with orderly and proportioned forms, than with those which appear not constructed according to any certain rule. . . . There is, however, another sense, somewhat more definite, in which beauty of writing characterizes a particular manner ; when it is used to signify a certain grace and amenity in the turn, either of style or sentiment, for which some authors have been particularly distinguished. In this sense, it denotes a manner neither remarkably sublime, nor vehemently passionate, nor uncommonly sparkling ; but such as raises in the reader an emotion of the gentle placid kind, similar to what is raised by the contemplation of beautiful objects in nature ; which neither lifts the mind very high, nor agitates it very much, but diffuses over the imagination an agreeable and pleasing serenity. Mr. Addison is a writer altogether of this character, and is one of the most proper and precise examples that can be given of it.

Of the latter of these, the highest, most correct and ornamented degree of the simple manner, Mr. Addison is, beyond doubt, in the English language, the most perfect example ; and therefore, though not without some faults, he is, on the whole, the safest model for imitation, and the freest from considerable defects which the language affords. Perspicuous and pure he is in the highest degree ; his precision indeed not very great, yet nearly as great as the subjects which he treats of require ; the construction of his sentences easy, agreeable and commonly very musical ; carrying a character of smoothness, more than of strength. . . . If he fails in anything, it is in want of strength and precision, which renders his manner, though perfectly suited to such essays as he writes in the *Spectator*, not altogether a perfect model for any of the higher and more elaborate kinds of composition.

From this search after beauty as an end there has been a marked reaction. It is no longer the languid, complacent style of Queen Anne's reign that is sought as a model, but the racy, vigorous utterance of the Elizabethan writers.

The English mind, and, as an offshoot of it, the American mind as well, are not partial to the elegant qualities, specially in public oral addresses. We are jealous for our strength. We are proud of our Saxon stock. We are, therefore, morbidly afraid of imposing on ourselves by elegant literary forms. We are in this respect what our language is, hardy, rough, careless of ease. The languages and temperaments of Southern Europe are in this respect our opposites. We have cultivated learning at the expense of taste ; they, taste at the expense of learning.

This prejudice, moreover, is often aggravated by affectations of the beautiful in literary expression. Affectations create caricatures of beauty ; these repel taste, as they repel good sense. That cast of character which leads a young man to wear long hair, and to part it in the middle, often appears in literature in a straining after the feminine qualities of style when no beauty of thought underlies and demands them. This nauseates short-haired men, and lends reason to their prejudice against the genuine because of the counterfeit elegance. The cant of literature, like that of religion, is never more disgusting than when it takes the form of the exquisite. *Morbid delicacy rasps manly nerves.*—PHELPS.

Such men, to be sure, have existed as Julius Cæsar ; but in general a correct and elegant style is hardly attainable by those who have passed their lives in action ; and no one has such a pedantic love of good writing as to prefer mendacious finery to rough and ungrammatical truth.—SIDNEY SMITH.

**Epigrams** are short poems ending in a point or turn of wit ; as,

An epigram is like a bee—a thing  
Of little size, with honey, and a sting.—MARTIAL.

**Retort** should perhaps be classed with the forms just referred to, as its effect depends upon the turn it gives to the words of the first speaker. Thus :

A French officer reproached a Swiss for fighting upon either side for money, “while we Frenchmen,” said he, “fight for honor.” “That is natural,” replied the Swiss ; “every one fights for what he most wants.”

One day Sheridan met two royal dukes in St. James’s Street, and the younger flippantly remarked : “I say, Sherry, we have just been discussing whether you are a greater fool or rogue : what is your opinion, old boy ?”—Sheridan bowed, smiled, and as he took each of them by the arm replied, “Why, faith, I believe I am between both.”—*Works*.

When Henry IV. was at Amiens, and very much fatigued, the mayor, with his council, came to pay their respects to him. The mayor began his harangue in this way : “King forever blessed—very puissant, very clement, very great—” Then the King cut him short by saying, “And very tired,” and so ended the mayor’s fine speech.

A lawyer, fined for expressing contempt of Court, protested, urging with great earnestness that on the contrary he had carefully concealed his feelings.

**Brilliancy** is perhaps the proper term to apply to language which puts the thought in such clear light, that the light itself attracts attention. To be memorable, style must possess something of this distinction.

Dr. Johnson's fame now rests principally upon Boswell. It is impossible not to be amused with such a book. But his *bow-wow* manner must have had a good deal to do with the effect produced; for no one, I suppose, will set Johnson before Burke, and Burke was a great and universal talker; yet now we hear nothing of this except by some chance remarks in Boswell. The fact is, Burke, like all men of genius who love to talk at all, was very discursive and continuous; hence he is not reported; he seldom said the sharp short things that Johnson almost always did, which produce a more decided effect at the moment, and which are so much more easy to carry off.—COLERIDGE.

I think Steele shone rather than sparkled. Those famous *beaux-esprits* of the coffee-houses . . . would make many brilliant hits—half a dozen in a night sometimes; but, like sharpshooters, when they had fired their shot they were obliged to retire under cover till their pieces were loaded again, and wait till they got another chance at the enemy; whereas Dick never thought that his bottle-companion was a butt to aim at—nay, a friend to shake by the hand.—THACKERAY.

But brilliancy is legitimate only when it is the result of polish, of fine finish, of artistic completeness of utterance. We have no respect for the ideas of men that seek to say bright things for the sake of display. We look upon them, as upon professional wits (see page 129), as performers rather than as companions, dealing with words rather than with thoughts, fit to amuse us in idle mood, but not to be consulted when we are in doubt.

When Ruskin says that he could not, even for a couple of months, live in a country so miserable as to possess no castles, his aim is to be epigrammatic, but he only makes us impatient of his morbid affectation. When Professor Clifford leaves for an inscription on his tomb, "I was not, and was conceived; I lived and did a little work; I am not, and grieve not," the *Spectator* justly remarks that though many will think the epitaph fine, it would be finer if it were inscribed above a horse. Coleridge has made some of the most exact distinctions known in literature,

but in the following he seems to have sought striking form rather than precise expression :

Let a young man separate I from Me as far as he possibly can, and remove Me till it is almost lost in the remote distance. "I am Me," is as bad a fault in intellectuals and morals as it is in grammar, while none but one—God—can say, "I am I," or "That I Am."—*Works*, vi. 495.

**Euphony** is another element of literary perfection.

Words have their aristocracy. Some have a noble birth ; a magnificent history lies behind them ; they were born amid the swelling and the bursting into life of great ideas. On the contrary, there are words which have plebeian associations. Some are difficult of enunciation ; and, by a secret sympathy, the mind attaches to them the distortion, perhaps the pain, of the vocal organs in their utterance. A single uncouth word may be to style what an uncontrollable grimace is to the countenance. Neither is a thing of beauty. Words not inelegant in themselves become so through pedestrian associations which colloquial usage affixes to them. Our Yankee favorite "guess" is a perfectly good word, pure English, of good stock, and long standing in the language. A better word, in itself considered, we have not in English use. But because it is a colloquial favorite, used by everybody, on every variety of subject and occasion, and often in a degraded sense, as in the compound "guess-work," it has become vulgar in the sense of "common ;" so that in many connections in which the real meaning of it would be entirely pertinent, the word would be unelegant. "Conjecture," or some equivalent, must take its place. . . . Wordsworth's poetry, again, is not wholly defensible from the charge of using in poetic measure an inelegant vocabulary. He believed in the poetry of common things, common thoughts, common people, and their common affairs. It was the aim of his life to lift up into the atmosphere of romance things lowly and obscure. "The Excursion" wrought in this respect one of the silent revolutions of literature in the direct interest of Christianity. But, in his attempt to effect that revolution, he did lean to an extreme. Even his regal imagination could not dignify such lines as these ; viz. :—

A household tub, like one of those  
Which women use to wash their clothes.—*PHELPS*.

Notions of euphony are not the same all the world over. I once asked a pundit, a professor of poetry, what he considered to be the most melodious word in Sanscrit. His reply was, *slakshna*. And he was not jesting.—HALL.

**A practice** almost indispensable to a satisfactory essay is to take it up, after revision according to every other standard has been completed, and read it aloud, noting for correction not only all harsh expressions, but all that the combination of sounds makes it difficult to enunciate.

In Lincoln's first inaugural occurs the following phrase, the peculiar combination of consonants and labials of which can only be appreciated by an attempt (we use the word attempt advisedly) to read it aloud :

"Will you hazard so desperate a step, while any portion of the ills you fly from have no real existence? Will you, while the certain ills you fly to are greater than all the real ones you fly from?"—*Magazine of American History*.

**Variety** is, finally, one of the most essential elements of perfection.

**In diction** an extensive and daily widening vocabulary is indispensable (see pages 401-403).

I have long been in the habit of reading daily some first-class English author, chiefly for the *copia verborum*, to avoid sinking into cheap and bald fluency, to give elevation, dignity, sonorousness, and refinement to my vocabulary.—CHOATE.

It is a mark of weakness, of poverty of speech, or at least of bad taste, to continue the use of pet words,\* or other peculiarities of language, after we have become conscious of them as such. In dialect, as in dress, individuality founded upon anything but general harmony and superior propriety, is offensive, and good taste demands that each shall please by its total impression, not by its distinguishable details.—MARSH.

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\* It is to be remarked that this very expression, "pet words," is a pet term of Mr. Marsh, occurring again and again in his "Lectures on the English Language."

Many of Mr. Carlyle's peculiarities of style as a writer are to be avoided rather than imitated, but at the same time a writer whose pages present so strong a front as do his is worthy of analytical study. What gives to Mr. Carlyle's sentences that vigor and freshness so manifest to every one? A partial explanation is to be found in the richness of his vocabulary. Probably no man living in this age was so thoroughly acquainted with the English dictionary as Mr. Carlyle, or used words more discriminatingly without marring his work with the appearance of labored construction. Take up any book of his and notice how seldom he has repeated even the smallest words in any given passage or paragraph. You rarely find more than one "and" in his longest sentences. Whole pages may be traversed without discovering a single "the," "to," or "but." Take up any of his writings, block out a section of one hundred words, and then count the distinct words that occur in it, counting each word only once. Here are a few results of such a test. In "Sartor Resartus" to one hundred words in the text 84 individual words; in the essay on "Mirabeau," 82; in the essay on "Goethe," 76; in the essay on "Burns," 73; in the "French Revolution," 90; in the "Reminiscences," 61; in the short essay on the "Death of Goethe," 87. This last section commences with the second paragraph of the essay, and contains few words of more than one syllable. These test selections have all been made at random, our only care being to avoid passages containing several proper names and those disagreeable home-made adjectives of which Mr. Carlyle was so fond, words generally ending in "ish." They seem to the reader to have been brewed in that old tenpot of his. Of course a writer could put together intelligible sentences by the yard without duplicating his words, but what man or woman does without effort, and effort painfully apparent, ever achieve this phenomenal result? Probably Mr. Carlyle strove to keep the percentage of new words in every page as high as possible. There is reason for believing that his best productions—those that pour gurgling from the author's heart—have been measured, weighed, every drop examined in his penetrating mental microscope, before it went forth to mingle in the flood. His work was slow, tiring, and he came to the conclusion late in life that so much pains cost too much. Still Mr. Carlyle's fame as a literary artist must have fallen short if he had been less careful in his strokes.—*N. C. Advocate.*

**In movement** there must be a like variety. Long sentences must be interspersed with shorter ones, periodic structure must be followed by sharp, crisp utterance; the reader must be kept constantly on the alert for something unexpected, never being suffered to adjust himself to a sing-song gait of which he has caught the rhythm.

"It is here," says Marmontel, "that we perceive the force of Lucian's comparison when he desired that the style and the thought, like a horseman and his horse, might be of one will, and move together harmoniously." And, as the same author adds, this oratorical motion is free and various; the bold and skilful horseman, whose steed is well-trained, and obedient to the whip and spur, may sometimes venture to leap the highest fences and clear

the widest ditches, but when the chase is over he will slacken his pace, and be content to walk slowly along the well-beaten bridle-path.—HERVEY.

In La Fontaine, so many verses, so many different styles of thought. But once Massignon hits on a certain kind of a sentence, he holds on to it with a death-like grip, page after page. Like a horse-car unable to leave its tramway, like a canal-boat which cannot quit its canal, on he goes, without turning an inch to the right or left, and on you go with him. What is the consequence? A monotony that at last palls on the ear and actually stops the reader. Besides, even the splendid profusion of words is not without its uniformity. His incomparable talent of setting forth a single thought under such a variety of shapes had for a long time astounded me, dazzled me. I used to take for a new idea what was nothing but the same idea presented again and again under various different forms. But reading aloud soon convinced me that there was something artificial in this exuberant display. I began to feel as you feel at one of those pieces where the same actor pretends to represent five or six different personages, whereas in reality the only thing changed is the costume.

Take a page of Saint-Simon, if you wish to realize more fully the idea that I wish to convey. He too repeats the same idea under twenty different shapes, but he does so as a clever magician turns one object into fifty by the blazing reflection of dazzling mirrors; he does so with the fire and heat of a man who, under the influence of a burning impression, always considers his expressions too feeble to adequately represent his ideas. He fights and struggles with his words to compel them to express what he means. He whips his language, spurs it, tortures it, drives it, overloads it, until at last it obeys him, and becomes just as passionate, fiery, and headlong as himself.—LÉGOUVÉ.

**Felicity** of diction is more than exactness and clearness. It expresses the idea so perfectly that the mind lingers for an instant to enjoy the perfection itself.

Take, for instance, the two famous epitaphs by the poet whose own epitaph, "O rare Ben Jonson," is itself a remarkable illustration of felicity (note quotations from the first on page 222).

#### ON THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

Underneath this sable hearse,  
Lies the subject of all verse.  
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother;  
Death! ere thou hast slain another  
Learned and fair, and good as she,  
Time shall throw his dart at thee.

Marble piles let no man raise  
To her name in after days;  
Some kind woman, born as she,  
Reading this, like Niobe  
Shall turn marble, and become  
Both her mourner and her tomb,

## ON MARGARET RATCLIFFE.

M arble weep, for thou dost cover  
 A dead beauty underneath thee  
 R ich as nature could bequeath thee :  
 G rant then no rude hand remove her.  
 A ll the gazers in the skies,  
 R ead not in fair heaven's story  
 E xpresser truth or truer glory  
 T han they might in her bright eyes.

R are as wonder was her wit,  
 A nd like nectar ever flowing ;  
 T ill time, stung by her bestowing,  
 C onquered hath both life and it ;  
 L ife, whose grief was out of fashion  
 I n these times. Few so have rued  
 F ate in a brother. To conclude,  
 F or wit, feature, and true passion,  
 E arth, thou hast not such another.

In the history of the world what has really preserved the memories of writers of verse has not been intellectual force, or the clear expression of love or pity, or even wit, but a certain indefinable felicity of style, a power of saying things as they never were said before, and so that they can never be forgotten. . . . It is probable that this will preserve his [Poe's] verse, like a rose petal in a drop of glycerine, bound to decay because of its ephemeral and disconnected condition, yet never actually decaying.—*Pull Mull Gazette*.

Every one is familiar, and has been amused, with Macaulay's characteristic assertion that "the Puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators." Few readers, however, are probably aware that Hume expresses identically the same idea. "Bear-baiting," he says, "was esteemed heathenish and unchristian; the sport, not the inhumanity, gave offence." Inasmuch as Macaulay's *mot* is known the world over and Hume's scarcely at all, we have an evidence how important is the way of putting things—more important, it seems, so far as notoriety is concerned, than the idea itself.—*Appleton's Journal*.

By cleverness I mean a comparative readiness in the invention and use of means for the realizing of objects and ideas—often of such ideas which the man of genius only could have originated, and which the clever man perhaps neither fully comprehends nor adequately appreciates, even at the moment that he is prompting or executing the machinery



of their accomplishment. In short, cleverness is a sort of genius for instrumentality. It is the brain in the hand. In literature cleverness is more frequently accompanied by wit, genius and sense by humor.—COLERIDGE.

**The fitting word** is always a prominent element of felicity. Who that has ever heard it can forget the line,

Her voice was ever soft, gentle, and low ?

Substitute synonyms, as,

Her tone was always mild, tranquil, subdued,

and what is there to linger in the memory ?

As the result of all my reading and meditation, I abstracted two critical aphorisms, deeming them to comprise the conditions and *criteria* of poetic style: first, that not the poem which we have read, but that to which we return with the greatest pleasure, possesses the genuine power and claims the name of essential poetry; secondly, that whatever lines can be translated into other words of the same language without diminution of their significance, either in sense or association, or in any worthy feeling, are so far vicious in their diction.—COLERIDGE.

**Onomatopœia**, or a correspondence between the thing signified and the sound of the word employed, is often an element of fitness. In the line from “Lear,” just quoted, the word “soft” sounds like what it signifies, appealing to the ear as well as to the eye, and thus entering the mind by two avenues of sense.

Compare :

Him there they found  
Squat like a toad close at the ear of Eve.—MILTON.

Grate on their scannell pipes of wretched straw.—ID.

Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,  
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings.—ID.

Her voice is but the shadow of a sound.—YOUNG.

Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone ;  
The huge round stone returning with a bound  
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the ground.—POPE.

These equal syllables alone require  
 Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire,  
 While expletives their feeble aid do join  
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line.—ID.

Soft is the strain when sephyr gently blows,  
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;  
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore  
 The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.—ID.

What! like Sir Richard, rumbling, rough, and fierce,  
 With arms, and George and Brunswick crowd the verse,  
 Read with tremendous sound your ears asunder,  
 With gun, drum, trumpet, blunderbuss and thunder?  
 Then all your muse's softer art display,  
 Let Carolina smooth the tuneful lay,  
 Lull with Amelia's liquid name the Nine,  
 And sweetly flow through all the royal line.—ID.

The slender acacia would not shake  
 One long milk-bloom on the tree;  
 The white lake-blossom fell into the lake  
 While the pimpernel dozed on the lea.—TENNISON.

Here the plot is blanch'd  
 By God's gift of a purity of soul  
 That will not take pollution, ermine-like  
 Armed from dishonor by its own soft snow.—BROWNING.

Pastiness and flatness are the qualities of a pancake, and thus far he attained his aim: but if he means it for me, let him place the accessories on the table lest what is insipid and clammy . . . grow into duller accretion and moister viscosity the more I masticate it.—LANDOR, of *Wordsworth*.

There is a familiar class of words called *imitative*, or, to use a hard term, *onomatopoeic*, where there is an evident connection between the sound and the sense. These are all, or nearly all, words descriptive of particular sounds, or acts accompanied by characteristic sounds, such as buzz, crash, gurgle, gargle, hum, whiz, jar, bellow, roar, whistle, whine, creak, cluck, gabble,\* and in conversation we often allow ourselves to use words of this class, not to be found in the largest dictionaries. The remark of a contemporary of Dr. Johnson's, that much of the effect of his conversation was owing to his "*bow-wow way*," will be remembered by every one. A great modern English poet, following the authority of

\* Compare hiss, bang, helter-skelter, namby-pamby, hotty-toity, roly-poly, harum-scarum, willy-nilly, nolens-volens, hugger-mugger.

Sidney, has even introduced into verse a word borrowed from the voice of the sheep, when speaking of certain censurable follies he calls them "baaing vanities."—MARSH.

Besides these properties in words, of sweetness or harshness, strength or weakness, there is another quality to be attended to, which is expression, or the peculiar aptness of some words to stand as symbols of certain ideas preferably to others. And this aptness arises from different causes; the first and most striking is that of imitation, from which proceed those that may be called mimical sounds, such as the *baa* of the sheep, the *hiss* of serpents, the *mew* and *purr* of cats, the *howl* of the wolf, the *bray* of an ass, the *whinny* of a horse, the *caw* of the raven. . . . Such words contain a power of expression from a natural resemblance which can never belong to signs merely instituted. After these mimical words, whose whole sounds are nearly the same with those formed by the several animals from which they were taken, there is another class which bears a fainter resemblance, merely from some letters contained in them, which were borrowed from the animal world. Thus among the vowels *a* was borrowed from the crow, *ā* from the goat, *ā* from the sheep, *oo* from the dove, *ō* from the ox, *ow* from the dog, etc. Of the consonants, we borrowed the *b* from the sheep, *k* from the crow, *m* from the ox, *r* from the dog, *s* from the serpent, *th* from the goose. We have also sounds resembling those made by inanimate objects. Thus *f* is like the sound of winds blowing through certain chinks. *V* is the noise made by some spinning-wheels when rapidly moved. *Sh* is the sound made by squibs and rockets previous to explosion. *S* by the flight of darts. *Ng* by a bell.—SHERIDAN.

Care must be taken to employ onomatopœia only as a means to more perfect expression; if used for its own sake, it meets the common fate of all affectation.

Especially must the misuse of words of this character be avoided. Poe, who uses onomatopœia with great effect, tells most happily of

—the tintinnabulation that so musically swells  
From the bells, bells, bells, bells;

but when Dickens in "Dombey and Son" speaks of "the

tintinnabulation of the gong" we stare at the page with wonder that his taste could have permitted the use of a figure so incongruous.

**Tautophony**, or the repetition of the same sound, is usually a defect in composition, but is sometimes employed with happy effect to produce a peculiar emphasis.

Thus Epictetus says that all philosophy lies in two words, *sustain* and *abstain*. The resemblance of the two words makes it easier to remember their distinction.

Shedd is fond of this figure, as, for instance :

Essential truth is the *element*, and the *attiment*, of a rational mind, and nothing short of this form of truth can long satisfy its wants. [The use of "short" and "long" is here questionable.]

But such usage is permitted only when the contrast between the two words is marked and obvious. On page 87 of this book will be found two instances; "omitting—admitting," and "instinctive—distinctive." For the first pair there is a reason, but the second pair is due to a slip of the pen that oversight did not correct.

**This Usage** easily slides into punning (see pages 117–122), which to a certain extent is permissible when plainly a means to the forcible expression of an idea. "Truth is mighty," announces one stump-speaker, impressively. "Yes, it is mighty," retorts his opponent, sarcastically, "mighty scarce." There is always a certain satisfaction in seeing the person attacking beaten by his own weapons, and this occurs when his words are so dexterously turned as to tell against him.

"You are nothing but a demagogue," said a tipsy fellow to Tom Marshall, who promptly replied: "Put a wisp of straw around you, and you will be nothing but a demijohn."

What is mind? No matter.

What is matter? Never mind.

"We must all hang together," urged Hancock, after the signing

of the Declaration of Independence ; " Yes," added Franklin, " or we shall all hang separately."

A London paper says that " Mrs. Alma Tadema wore at a recent reception a dress of gold brocade, made with a cuirass bodice, with shoulder-straps of gold guipure, and a plain petticoat of gold color, trimmed with a deep gold ruche, the inside of which was lined with gray-green satin." The *Chicago Tribune* understands that Mr. Alma Tadema wore a look of fixed melancholy.

Here thou, great Anna, whom three worlds obey,  
Dost sometimes counsel take, and sometimes tea.—POPE.

The pun must be appropriate to the occasion, and its purpose manifest, or it will seem an oversight ; as when Max Müller declares, that " Sound etymology has nothing to do with sound."

Compare the use of the same words on page 66.

The use of the same word successively as two different parts of speech is usually to be avoided ; yet under this principle it is sometimes effective, as in the following sentence, where " more " is used first as an adjective and then as an adverb.

That he should be in earnest it is hard to conceive ; since any reasons of doubt which he might have in this case would have been reasons of doubt in the case of other men, who may give more but cannot give more evident signs of thought than their fellow-creatures.—BOLINGBROKE.

Care must of course be taken not to be misled by the resemblance of sound. " I never get over a first feeling of repulsion," says a young writer ; " if I am once repulsed." But what he means is, " if I am once repelled."

" I wish to be a friend to the friendless," said a gushing speaker at a benevolent meeting, " a father to the fatherless, and widow to the widowless."

" Oh, I don't object to standing on a platform and allowing information to ooze out of me—to use Mark Twain's simile—like ottar of roses out of the otter !"

**Alliteration**, or the use of successive words beginning with the same letter, is a form of tautophony, and is often employed with happy effect, especially in poetry.

So far has this figure been carried that long poems and stories have been written, in which every word began with the same consonant.

CACOPHONOUS COUPLET ON CARDINAL WOLSEY.

Begot by butchers, but by bishops bred,  
How high his honor holds his haughty head.

Mrs. Crawford says she wrote one line in her "Kathleen Mavourneen" on purpose to confound the Cockney warblers, who would sing it,

The 'orn of the 'unter is 'eard on the 'ill.

So Moore—

A 'eart that is 'umble might 'ope for it 'ere.

Or :

Ha helephant heasily heats hat his hease  
Hunder humbrageous hambrella trees !

Whole poems have been written wherein every word begins with the same letter. Of these the best known is the "Pugna Porcorum," containing about three hundred lines, every one of which begins with the letter P. . . . The poem "De Laude Calvorum" is perhaps the most curious literary performance in the world. This poem of one hundred and forty lines, every word of which begins with a C, was composed in honor of Charles the Bald, by Hugbaldi or Hugbald, a monk who flourished about the year 876.

Perhaps the best English alliterative verse is the following :

An Austrian army, awfully arrayed,  
Boldly by battery beslege Belgrade ;  
Cossack commanders cannonading come,  
Dealing Destruction's devastating doom ;  
Every endeavor engineers essay,  
For fame, for fortune fighting—furious fray.  
Generals 'gainst generals grapple ; gracious God,  
How honors Heaven heroic hardihood !  
Infuriate, indiscriminate in ill,  
Kinsmen kill kinsmen, kindred kinsmen kill.  
Labor low levels loftiest, longest lines ;  
Men march 'mid mounds, 'mid moles, 'mid murderous mines ;

Now noisy noxious numbers notice naught  
 Of outward obstacles opposing ought ;  
 Poor patriots, partly purchased, partly pressed,  
 Quite quaking, quickly " Quarter ! Quarter ! " quest.  
 Reason returns, religious right redounds,  
 Sorrow soon stops such sanguinary sounds.  
 Truce to thee, Turkey, triumph to thy twain,  
 Unjust, unwise, unmerciful Ukraine !  
 Vanish vain victory ! vanish victory vain !  
 Why with we warfare ? Wherefore welcome were  
 Xerxes, Ximenes, Xanthus, Xavier ?  
 Yield, yield, ye youth ; ye yeomen, yield your yell,  
 Zeno's, Zarpate's, Zoroaster's zeal,  
 Attracting all, arms against arms appal !

With like waste of labor the *Lipogrammatists* excluded some particular letter from their compositions, while the *Pangrammatists* crowd all the letters of the alphabet into each of their sentences. Both these attempts are shown in the following stanza written with ease without e's.

A jovial swain may rack his brain,  
 And tax his fancy's might,  
 To quiz in vain, for 'tis most plain,  
 That what I say is right.

Lord Holland, in 1824, wrote a story, called " Eve's Legend," that contained no other vowel except e.

The *Acrostic* is a poem in which the first letters of the successive lines spell a word that is the subject of the whole. The actress Rachel received the most delicate compliment the acrostic has ever paid. A diadem set with precious stones was given to her, so arranged that the initials of the names of the successive stones were in their order the initials of six of her principal parts, and in their order formed her name, thus :

R uby,	R oxanna.
A methyst,	A meniade.
C ornelian,	C amille.
H ematite,	H ermione.
E merald,	E mille.
L apis Lazull,	L aodice.

In No. 60 of the *Spectator*, Addison says of the *Chronogram* :

This kind of wit appears very often on modern medals, especially those of Germany, when they represent, in the inscription, the year in which they were coined. Thus we see on a medal of Gustavus Adolphus the following words :

ChristVs DuX ergo trIVMphVs.

If you take the pains to pick the figures out of the several words, and range them in their proper order, you will find that they amount to MDCXVVVII., or 1627, the year in which the medal was stamped; for, as some of the letters distinguish themselves from the rest, and overtop their fellows, they are to be considered in a double capacity, both as letters and as figures. Your laborious German wits will turn over a whole dictionary for one of these ingenious devices. A man would think they were searching after an apt classical term; but, instead, they are looking out a word that has an M, an L, or a D in it. When, therefore, we meet with any of these inscriptions, we are not so much to look in them for the thought, as for the year of the Lord.

The *Anagram* hides the word signified by transposing the letters so as to form a new word.

Camden gravely announced that the following anagram showed the “undoubted rightful claim to the monarchy of Britain, as successor of the valorous King Arthur,” of the prince whose name was transposed:

Charles James Stuart—Claims Arthur's seat.

Here is another:

James Stuart—A just master.

Lady Eleanor Davies, wife of the poet Sir John Davies, was the Cassandra of her day; and as her prophecies, in the troubled times of Charles II., were usually against the Government, she was at one time brought into the High Court of Commission. She was not a little mad, and fancied the spirit of Daniel was in her, from an anagram she had formed of her own name:

Eleanor Davies—Reveal, O Daniel!

This anagram had too much by an l, and too little by an s, but such trifles as these were no check to her aspirations. The court attempted to expel the spirit from the lady; and the bishops argued the point with her out of Holy Writ; but to no purpose. She returned text for text, until one of the deans of the Arches, says Heylin, “shot her through and through with an arrow borrowed from her own quiver.” Taking up a pen, he wrote:

Dame Eleanor Davies—Never so mad a ladie!

This happy fancy set the solemn court to laughing, and drove Cassandra to the utmost dejection of spirits. Foiled by her own weapon, her energy forsook her; and either she never afterward ventured to enrol herself among the order, or the anagram disarmed her utterances, for we hear no more of her among the prophets.



In *Rhophalic Verses* a monosyllable is followed by a dissyllable, a trisyllable, and so on to the end of the line. The *Palindrome* reads the same either backward or forward; like this, ascribed to Napoleon :

Able was I ere I saw Elba ;

or this, quite as plausibly reported as the first speech of the first man :

Madam, I'm Adam.

*Equivocal Verse* reads one way across both of two columns, and quite another when each column is taken separately. Thus :

THE HOUSES OF STUART AND HANOVER.

I love with all my heart  
The Hanoverian part  
And for that settlement  
My conscience gives consent,  
Most righteous is the cause  
To fight for George's laws,  
It is my mind and heart  
Though none will take my part,

The Tory party here  
Most hateful doth appear ;  
I ever have denied  
To be on James's side,  
To fight for such a king  
Will England's ruin bring.  
In this opinion, I  
Resolve to live and die.

*Serpentine Letters* in like manner convey one meaning when read down each page, but a contrary when read across both pages. The swindling contract on page 201 is an illustration.

*Cento Verse* is made up by patching together lines from standard poems. Thus :

The heath this night must be my bed,—SCOTT.

Ye vales, ye streams, ye groves, adieu !—POPE.

Farewell for aye, e'en love is dead,—PROCTER.

Would I could add, remembrance too !—BYRON.

In *Concatenation*, or chain-writing, the last word or phrase in each line is taken for the beginning of the next. Thus :

TRUTH.

Nerve thy soul with doctrines noble,  
Noble in the walks of time,  
Time that leads to an eternal,  
An eternal life sublime ;  
Life sublime in moral beauty,  
Beauty that shall ever be ;  
Ever be to lure thee onward,  
Onward to the fountain free ;  
Free to every earnest seeker,  
Seeker for the Fount of Youth,  
Youth exultant in its beauty,  
Beauty of the living truth.

*Echo Verses* have been famous in every tongue. Thus :

Echo, mysterious nymph, declare  
Of what you're made, and what you are.

*Echo—Air!*

Ben Jonson speaks of "A pair of scissors and a comb in verse," and the *Spectator* ridicules the fantastically shaped poems, axes, eggs, altars, etc., of which a Greek poet, Theodoric, is said to have been the inventor. One of the best is the following :

THE WINE-GLASS.

Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow?  
Who hath contentions? Who  
hath wounds without cause?  
Who hath redness of eyes?  
They that tarry long at the  
wine. They that go to  
seek mixed wine. Look  
not thou upon the  
wine when it is red,  
when it giveth its  
color in the  
CUP;  
when it  
moveth itself  
aright.  
At  
the last  
it biteth like a  
serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

Further illustrations of this misapplied ingenuity in the construction of verse will be found in Morgan's "Macaronic Poetry," from which most that has been said on the subject has been taken. We have treated the subject thus fully in order to impress the principle that the moment form is studied for itself, and not for what it expresses, the exercise is no longer literary composition. We have used the word Perfection in preference to Beauty in speaking of this quality of style, because the only legitimate beauty of written language is the perfection with which it expresses the idea. Forget the idea, study beauty for the sake of beauty, permit the insertion or the retention of an

unnecessary sentence for the sake of its euphony, and the composition is degraded from the expression of thought into something akin to riddle-making.

**The principal advantage** of an acquaintance with form-peculiarities is readiness in discerning and discarding them when they accidentally appear. More than once has a newspaper been misled into publishing a libellous Acrostic, because the editor did not glance down the first letters of the lines when he read the little poem handed in; and hundreds of farmers would have escaped a swindle had they applied the principle of Serpentine Letters to the contract shown on page 201. Commonest of all the errors under this head, however, is Tautophony. Only the most experienced writers can afford to let an essay appear before they have glanced through it to see that the same sound is not unintentionally repeated in a way to catch the ear unpleasantly. Thus:

Scene at Continental kursaal: English party at card table—  
 “Hello, we are two to two.” English party at opposite table—  
 “We are two to two, too.” German spectator, who “speaks English,” to companion who is acquiring the language—“Vell, now you see how dis is. Off you want to gife expression to yourself in English all you have to do is to blay mit der French horn!”—  
*N. Y. Sun.*

The fact is, the rules of emphasis come *in in* interruption of your supposed general law of position.—ALFORD.

I used the word in an *unusual* sense, but at the same time one fully sanctioned by *usage*.—ID.

*Maybe I may be able to come before the year is out.*—CHARLES LAMB.

Find other illustrations on pages 75, 125, 235.

**EXERCISE.**—Vary the expression so as to escape tautophony in the following sentences:

In a calm moonlight night the *sea* is a most beautiful object to

*see.* The abilities as well as the virtues of King Alfred justly entitled him to the title of the Great. To oppose this formidable invasion, the Royalists were *divided* into four *divisions*. Napoleon's ambition *led* him to aspire to universal dominion, the pursuit of which finally *led* to his complete overthrow. The *writings* of Buchanan are *written* with strength, perspicuity, and neatness. The same *character* has *characterized* their descendants in modern times. The few who *regarded* them in their true light were *regarded* as mere dreamers. It is not the least of the many *attractions* that permanently *attract* strangers to the French capital. This renowned fortress was of the very highest *importance* from its strength and *important* situation. Wellington was *anxious* to be relieved from all *anxiety* in that quarter. The designs of Providence *extend* to the *extension* and dispersion of the species. Seduced by these flattering *appearances*, the monarch *appears* for a time to have trusted to the pleasing hope that his difficulties were at an end.

**Avoidance** of tautophony, especially of the repetition of the same word, may, however, be carried so far as to obscure the sense (see page 411). Thus Marsh writes ("Lectures on the English Language," page 22):

I must here once for all make the sad concession that many of Chaucer's works are disfigured, stained, polluted, by a grossness of thought and of language which strangely and painfully contrasts with the delicacy, refinement, and moral elevation of his other productions.

Here we have "works" apparently contrasted with "productions," as though they were two different things. The author might much better have said "of his other works;" though indeed, "of the others," or "of the rest," would be precise and perspicuous.

Compare the following:

It is said there was an Amsterdam merchant who had dealt largely in corn all his life, who had never seen a field of wheat growing: this man had doubtless acquired by experience an accurate judgment of the qualities of each description of corn,—of the

best methods of storing it, of the arts of buying and selling it at proper times, etc.; but he would have been greatly at a loss in its cultivation, though he had been, in a certain way, long conversant about corn.

Campbell has well remarked :

It is justly observed by Abbé Girard that when a performance grows dull through an excess of uniformity, it is not so much because the ear is tired by the frequent repetition of the same sound, as because the mind is fatigued by the frequent recurrence of the same idea. If, therefore, there be a remarkable paucity of ideas, a diversity of words will not answer the purpose, or give to the work an agreeable appearance of variety. On the contrary, when an author is at great pains to vary his expressions, and for this purpose even deserts the common road, he will, to an intelligent reader, but the more expose his poverty the more he is solicitous to conceal it.

**Proverbs, Aphorisms, Apothegms, Paradoxes, and Epigrams** admit considerable attention to form, being usually marked by antithesis, climax, tautophony, alliteration, and other figures that would be oppressive in continued discourse.

**Proverbs**, "the wit of one and the wisdom of many," forcibly express some practical truth, the result of experience or observation; as, "He runs far that never turns."

The pithy quaintness of old Howell has admirably described the ingredients of an exquisite proverb to be *sense, shortness, and salt*.

Proverbs have often resulted from the spontaneous emotions or the performed reflections of some extraordinary individual, whose energetic expression was caught by a faithful ear, never to perish.  
—DISRAELI.

A woman is as old as she looks;

A man as old as he feels.

**Aphorisms** differ from proverbs in relating to abstract truth, rather than to practical matters. An apho-

rism is the substance of a doctrine, and is characterized by the disproportion between the simplicity of the expression and the richness of the sentiment conveyed by it (Smith); as, Hypocrisy is the homage vice pays to virtue.

That aphorism of the wise man, "The desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labor."—BARROW.

Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent.—SWIFT.

There are calumnies against which even innocence loses courage.—NAPOLEON.

There is a great difference between an egg and an egg-shell, but at a distance they look very much alike.—COLERIDGE.

Thought widens, but lames; activity narrows, but quickens.—GOETHE.

Men ride their arguments as children their horses. They put their legs over a stick, run far afield, and make believe that the stick has carried them.—DALLAS.

Custom has no power over us except as it implies sympathy with ourselves in past conditions.—ID.

Incredulity is but Credulity seen from behind, bowing and nodding assent to the Habitual and the Fashionable.—COLERIDGE.

Thought is like the spring of a watch, most powerful when most compressed.

Wisdom consists in the ready and accurate perception of analogies.—WHATELY.

**Apothegms** are in common matters what aphorisms are in higher. Their characteristic is terseness, as shown in *Punch's* advice to those about to be married: "Don't."

Maurice Block describes the American press as "despotism tempered by assassination."—*Atlantic Monthly*.

"I would bestow my daughter," said Themistocles, "upon a man without money, rather than upon money without a man."

My living in Yorkshire was so far out of the way that it was actually twelve miles from a lemon.—SIDNEY SMITH.

The following notes passed between two celebrated comedians;

DEAR J —: Send me a shilling. Yours, B.

P.S.—On second thoughts, make it two.

To which his friend replied :

DEAR B—: I have but one shilling in the world. Yours, J.  
P.S.—On second thoughts, I want that for dinner.

The reason why so few marriages are happy is because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.—  
SWIFT.

Fontenelle declared that the secret of happiness is to have the heart cold and the stomach warm.

Montesquieu put forth a wicked epigram, that the only good book of the Spaniards is that which exposes the absurdity of all the rest.

Paragraphers get very wealthy if they live long enough. The chief difficulty with them is to get money to live long enough.

This reminds me of the boy who grew impatient at the slow grinding of the wheat he had brought to mill. "I could eat that flour faster than you turn it out," he said to the miller. "How long?" "Till I starved."

Mark Twain was asked to contribute to the paper issued at the fair in aid of abused children, in Boston, and responded as follows :

HARTFORD, November 30, 1860.

DEAR EDITORS: I do it with pleasure, . . . but I also do it with pain, because I am not in favor of this movement. Why should I want a "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children" to prosper, when I have a baby down-stairs that kept me awake several hours last night, with no pretext whatever for it but a desire to make me trouble? This occurs every night, and it embitters me, because I see how needless it was to put in the other burglar alarm, a costly and complicated contrivance which cannot be depended on, because it's always getting out of order and won't "go." whereas, although the baby is always getting out of order, too, it can nevertheless be depended on, for the reason that the more it does get out of order the more it does go.

Yes, I am bitter against your society, for I think the idea of it is all wrong; but if you will start a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Fathers, I will write you a whole book.

Yours, with emotion,

MARK TWAIN.

Life would be tolerably agreeable if it were not for its pleasures.—SIR GEORGE CORNEWALL LEWIS.

Our knowledge consists in tracing ignorance as far back as possible.—ROYER COLLARD.

I do not love even his faults.—SHERIDAN.

Artemas Ward voted during the late Civil war for Henry Clay. "I admit that Henry is dead," he explained, "but inasmuch as we don't seem to have a live statesman in our National Congress, by all means let us have a first-class corpse."

**Paradoxes** are seemingly absurd in appearance and language, but true in fact. Thus :

Of Mr. Grote, the historian of Greece, and Mrs. Grote, Sidney Smith once wittily said : " I do like them both so much, for he is so ladylike, and she is such a perfect gentleman ! "

Thackeray's idea of a dandy is given in the following note : " My dear Edward,—A ' dandy ' is an individual who would be a lady if he could, but as he can't, does all he can to show the world he's not a man. "

A beau is everything of a woman but the sex, and nothing of a man beside it.—FIELDING.

There are lots of men who have attained high reputation for strict attention to business, but the trouble has been it wasn't their own business.—*Marathon Independent*.

Glucose is described in a recent French paper as follows : " Glucoso—a product with which wine is manufactured without grapes, cider without apples, and confectionery without sugar. "

*Definitions of the Period*.—A privileged person—One who is so much a savage when thwarted that civilized persons avoid thwarting him.

A liberal-minded man—One who disdains to prefer right to wrong.

Radicals—Men who maintain the supposed right of each of us to help ruin all.

Liberals—Men who flatter radicals.

Conservatives—Men who give way to radicals.

A domestic woman—A woman like a domestic.

Humor—Thinking in fun while we feel in earnest.

A musical woman—One who has strength enough to make much noise and obtuseness enough not to mind it.—GEORGE ELIOT.

I owe much ; I have nothing. I leave the rest to the poor.—RABELAIS'S *Will*.

When the superannuated statesman went to his rest : " Lamartine has ceased to survive himself, " announced a Paris journal.

Prince Metternich remarked to the best-dressed lady of the Second Empire : " I notice that your bonnets grow smaller and smaller, and the bills larger and larger. One of these days the milliner will bring nothing but the bill. "



## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### **Perfection.**

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- Brilliancy, p. 467.
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- Reading the essay aloud, p. 470.
- Variety in words, p. 470.
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## CHAPTER XXV.

### PREPARATION FOR THE PRESS.

The art of printing demands from its English and American patrons not a multiplicity of words merely, but a style combining simplicity and catholicity of structure, conformity to the principles of universal grammar, and consequently a freedom from provincialisms and arbitrary idioms, intelligibility, in short, to a degree not required in the literature of any other age or race.—**MASSE.**

SOUTHEY says in his "Colloquies" that "one of the first effects of printing was to make proud men look on learning as disgraced by being thus brought within reach of the common people. When laymen in humble life were enabled to procure books, the pride of aristocracy took an absurd course, insomuch that at one time it was deemed derogatory to a nobleman if he could read or write. Even scholars themselves complained that the reputation of learning and the respect due it and its rewards were lowered when it was thrown open to all men. Even in this island, ignorance was for some generations considered a mark of distinction, by which a man of gentle birth chose, not unfrequently, to make it apparent that he was no more obliged to live by the toil of his brain than by the sweat of his brow."

However true this may once have been, no traces of this feeling appear at the present day. In 1870, when Gladstone and Disraeli were battling for the premiership of England, a cartoon in *Punch* represents the one picking up from a book-stall a novel just published by the other,

who, in turn, is examining a book on mythology just completed by the first. Queen Victoria wrote, and prudently invested the proceeds of, a life of her late husband, and her daughters have followed in her footsteps. In no other field is distinction so universally sought as in literature. A considerable proportion of intelligent people appear in print in some way or other during their lives, and a larger proportion try to. So it seems desirable to add to the directions already given for letter-writing (see pages 102-104) some further hints for those who are ambitious to see something printed more pretentious than news-letters.

(1) **Make your Manuscript Legible.**—This point has been insisted upon in letter-writing, but it must here be emphasized again, because there is much more at stake. A blotted letter may cause annoyance, loss, serious difficulty, but these will be limited to few persons, and will usually be temporary. A misprint is practically final, and its mischief will be as wide as is the circulation of the page it appears in. The general rule is, **Make your manuscript read exactly as you want the printed page to appear, in spelling, in punctuation, and in capitals, as well as in words.**

A singular suit came before the courts of Michigan in which the letter of the law was in conflict with its spirit, and the question before the court was whether the letter or the spirit must be obeyed. The State Legislature attempted to pass a law making it a penal offence to sell liquor to minors, but, by a typographical or a clerical error, the law was made to read miners. The intent of the law was too plain to be mistaken, and in one of the counties of the State the prosecuting attorney brought suit against a saloon-keeper for selling liquor to minors. In the trial of the case the counsel for the defence put in the plea

that the act under which the action was brought could not be applied to the case in question, and upon investigation it was discovered that the act, as it reads, applies to miners and not to minors. The prosecuting attorney, however, secured the conviction of the saloon-keeper, on the ground of the intent of the law, rightly holding that it was plainly meant to prohibit the sale of liquor to minors. The case was appealed.

**(2) Read your Proof.**—It is a curious fact that the average compositor will deviate more from printed than from written copy, showing that a legible manuscript, though much, is not all that is required. One can better afford to insist upon seeing the proof, and to correct it carefully, than to be the victim of such blunders as are frequent even in carefully edited newspapers.

It is said that an entire form of the last edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" had to be reprinted because of the unnoticed dropping of the first *t* from the last word in the following sentence :

A page was trained to receive his best reward and worst punishment from the smile or frown of the lady of the castle, and, as he grew to manhood, to cherish an absorbing passion as the strongest stimulus to a noble life, and the contemplation of female virtue, as embodied in an Isolde or a Beatrice, as the truest earnest of future immortality.

The flowing reporter who wrote, with reference to a well-known belle, "Her dainty feet were encased in shoes that might have been taken for fairy boots," tied his wardrobe up in his handkerchief and left for parts unknown when it appeared the next morning : "Her dirty feet were encased in shoes that might be taken for ferry boats."

Many errors occur by the omission of an initial letter, as where "The Polish insurgents were defeated with great laughter." The cutting off of a final letter is quite as bad, as, for instance, "You cannot fight against the future ; *Tim* is on our side." Other letters are often dropped, to the great amusement of those who enjoy the indelicate blunders of the typo. A Southern paper says :

The steamer came to grief through running heavily into a *rat*.

And another Southern paper was obliged to apologize and explain for having called Mobile, to the great indignation of the inhabitants, "A great coffee-pot," meaning innocently enough "a great coffee port."

Compositors make strange work of scientific statements. I sometimes fancy they are not altogether so innocent in this matter as they would have us believe, and that they compose sometimes "with their tongue" very much "in their cheek." They are fond, so far as my own individual experience is concerned, of substituting "comic" for "cosmic," "plants" for "planets," "human" for "known," and in other ways making hash generally of my more serious and solemn statements. The most remarkable change they ever arranged for me was one of which I still retain "documentary evidence" in a proof of the little book on Spectroscopic Analysis, which I wrote for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Here the words which in the work itself appear—as they were certainly written—"lines, bands, and stria in the violet part of spectra," were positively printed "links, bonds, and stripes for the violent kind of spectres."—PROCTOR.

The following, from *Macmillan's Magazine*, are further specimens :

Where *waddling* in a pool of blood  
The bravest Tuscans lay,

where for "waddling" read "wallowing."

In a passage on William Rufus occur the lines—

Who spacious regions gave,  
A *wasteful* beast!

where the original has "a waste for beasts."

No triumph flushed that haughty *Brown*,

only differs from the original by the capital and the addition of the final letter to the last word.

In a reprint of "Lord Ullin's Daughter" occurs this curious reading :

Come back ! he cried in *Greek*,  
Across the stormy water.

Here is a new version of Scott :

He is gone on the mountain,  
He is lost to the forest,  
Like a summer-dried fountain,  
When our need was the *mo* dust.

Here a variation on Macaulay :

And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the *burglars* of Carlisle.

Another :

Hermiluis on black Auster,  
Grave *chaplain* on grave steed.

From a description of a waterfall :

From rock to rock, the giant *elephants*  
Leaps with delirious bound,

where, of course, "elephant" is a *varia lectio* for "element."

If ever two great men might seem during their whole lives to have moved in direct opposition, Milton and *Jerry my Tailor* were they.

A variation on Scott :

The way was long, the wind was cold,  
The minstrel was *infernal* old.

Another on Macaulay :

Hard by, a *fish* on a block had laid his *rattles* down,  
Virginius caught the *rattles* up, and hid them in his gown.

Florence De Laigne, who recently published some verses on "Autumn" in these columns, writes to ask, "Who is responsible for the typographical errors in the *Hawkeye*?" Lean down here, Florence, while we whisper in your ear: "—sh; nobody is. The editor writes so plainly that even a blind man can spell out his words; the compositors are college men who have edited papers of their own, and they set up the matter exactly as it is written, and correct what mistakes the editor makes; the proof-reader is a professor of rhetoric and philology in an Iowa college, and never made a mistake in his life; and he corrects what few mistakes the compositors may make; the foreman is a Gottingen graduate, who has nothing to do but to see that the matter is perfect when the forms go down. There isn't a mistake in the *Hawkeye* when it reaches the press. But we'll tell you, as a professional secret, Florence, how the mistakes creep in. The pressman told the manager, and the manager told us; it's the ink, Florence, it's the ink. We pay out thousands and thousands of dollars a year for good ink, and we can't get an article that won't fairly measele the paper with typographical errors."—*Burlington Hawkeye*.

Many of the blunders of the press are of the sort which one might suppose would be corrected by the most careless compositor and would certainly be detected by the most ordinary of proof-readers. Perhaps this is one reason why these errors appear so amusing. Not long since the British public were edified by the interesting information that twenty-five Russian men-of-war were proceeding to the Black Sea "to take part in the autumn manœuvres next summer." Of a like sort was the announcement that Beethoven's pastoral symphony would "be performed at the Monday Popular Concerts next Saturday." So also the statement that

"on *one day* of last week a hundred and forty deaths by cholera occurred in Naples in *forty-eight* hours." Another country newspaper in England apologized for a slight error in a previous issue, in which it was stated: "Much regret is felt at the death of Councilman Cooper, who was seventy-eight years of age, and has been a member of the council for *over eighty years*." So again:

"Now paper was first made of linen in 1300. Linen was first made in 1563, but the introduction of cotton, etc."

That editor should take the Scotchman's advice "to buy a bag of dates and swallow the seeds."

Even more exasperating are errors resulting from what some presumptuous compositor or proof-reader supposes to be corrections of errors by the author.

Freeman's historical essays were amended more or less by the editors through whose hands they passed for publication in the Reviews. For book-publication, Mr. Freeman has restored the original reading. Examples: Editor—Every renewed instance. Freeman—Every fresh instance. Ed.—The Turks were expelled. F.—The Turks were driven out. Ed.—Never was Greece either nobler or baser. F.—Never did Greece rise higher or fall lower. Ed.—The kind of government established. F.—The kind of government which was set up. This is a good lesson of taste in choice of words. Further than that, in one or two instances, the meaning is not as precisely given by the editor as by the author.

An eminent French philological writer, when accused of violating his own principles of orthography in one of his printed essays, thus replies: "It was not I that printed my essay, it was Mr. Didot. Now Mr. Didot, I confess it with pain, is not of my opinion with regard to the spelling of certain plurals, and I cannot oblige him to print against his conscience and habits. You know that every printing-office has its rules, its fixed system, from which it will not consent to depart. For example, I think the present system of punctuation detestable, because the points are multiplied to a ridiculous excess. Well, I attempt to prove this by precept and example, and the very printers who publish my a gument scatter points over it as if they were shaken out of a pepper-box. It is their way. What would you have? They will print my *theory* only on condition that I will submit to their *practice*."—MARSH.

Finally, there is the chance of whole lines being misplaced in the transferring of the type from the "galley" to the page. Not till the press is fairly at work can the author be sure that his essay will appear as he wrote it.

A ludicrous transposition occurred in the make-up of a couple of telegraphic items in the *New Haven Journal and Courier* recently, which produced the following effect: The first item read, "A large cast-iron wheel, revolving 900 times per minute, exploded in that city yesterday after a long and painful illness. Deceased was a prominent Thirty-second degree Mason." This was followed by the second item, which read: "John Fadden, the well-known florist and real estate broker of Newport, R. I., died in Wardner & Russell's sugar-mill, at Crystal Lake, Ill., on Saturday, doing \$3,000 damage to the building, and injuring several workmen and Lorenzo Wilcox fatally."—*Boston Post*.

#### HOW TO CORRECT PROOF.

The following are the chief rules observed, and signs used, by Printers in correcting proofs for the press:

1. No alteration should be made between the lines which has not some mark opposite it in the margin, to attract the printer's eye.

2. Instructions to the printer should be enclosed within a circle, to distinguish them from additions to the proof.

3. When a point, letter, or word is TO BE CHANGED, draw the pen through it, and write the new point, letter, or word *in the margin*. (See Nos. 1, 5, and 6.)\*

4. When points, letters, or words are TO BE INSERTED, write them in the margin, and mark a *caret* (^) at the place where they are to be introduced. (See Nos. 2, 16, 19, 20, and 22.)

5. In the case of quotation marks, asterisks, or apostrophes, which are TO BE INSERTED, a curve should be drawn under them, thus ~. (See Nos. 24, 30, 31, 33, 34, and 37.)

6. In the case of a period TO BE INSERTED, it should be placed in the margin *within a circle* ⊙, otherwise it might be overlooked. (See No. 29.)

7. When a point, letter, or word is TO BE OMITTED altogether, draw the pen through it, and write *Δ*/(dele) in the margin. (See Nos. 3, 25, 35, and 36.)

8. Letters or words placed TOO CLOSE should have a stroke drawn between them, and a *space* (≠) marked in the margin. (See No. 4.)

9. Letters TOO FAR SEPARATED should be joined by curves (∪), and have curves marked in the margin. (See No. 12.)

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\* These Nos. refer to the numbers of the corrections in the "Example of an Author's Proof," etc., on page 490.



10. When two paragraphs are TO BE CONJOINED, draw a curved line from the end of the one to the beginning of the other, and write in the margin, "*run on.*" (See No. 7.)

11. When a sentence in the body of a paragraph is TO BEGIN A NEW PARAGRAPH, draw a square bracket ( [ ) round the first letter of it, and write in the margin, *N.P.* (new paragraph). (See No. 11.)

12. When a word in italics is TO BE PRINTED IN ROMAN, underline it, and write *rom.* in the margin. (See No. 8.)

13. When a word in roman is TO BE PRINTED IN ITALICS, underline it, and write *ital.* in the margin. (See No. 10.)

14. When a word is TO BE PRINTED IN SMALL CAPITALS, draw a double line under it, and write *sm. cap.* in the margin. (See No. 18.)

15. When a letter or word is TO BE PRINTED IN CAPITALS, draw a triple line under it, and write *caps.* in the margin. (See No. 23.)

16. When a word in capitals or small capitals is TO BE PRINTED IN SMALL LETTERS, underline it, and write in the margin, *l. c.* ("lower case," the "case" in which capitals are kept being above the other). (See No. 21.)

17. When a letter is inserted UPSIDE DOWN, draw a line under it, and make a reverse *9/* in the margin. (See No. 9.)

18. When a deleted word is TO BE RETAINED, draw a dotted line under it, and write *stet* (let it stand) in the margin. (See No. 13.)

19. When a SPACE STICKS UP between two words, it is noticed by a stroke in the margin. (See No. 14.)

20. When a line SHOULD BE INDENTED, put a square bracket at the point where the line should begin, and write *indent* in the margin. (See No. 17.)

21. When a letter of a DIFFERENT CHARACTER has got into a word, a line should be drawn under it, and *w.f.* (wrong font) marked in the margin. (See No. 26.)

22. When two letters are TO BE TRANSPOSED, draw a short line under them, and write *tr.* in the margin. (See No. 28.)

23. When two or more words are TO BE TRANSPOSED, draw a curved line above the first and below the second, and write *tr.* in the margin. (See Nos. 15 and 27.)

24. When letters or lines stand CROOKED OR IRREGULAR, draw lines above and below them. (See No. 32.)

25. When a second proof, incorporating first corrections, is wanted, write *Revise* on the upper corner: When no such proof is wanted, and it is ready to be printed off, write *Press* on the upper corner.

Examples of an Author's Proof, with the marks for making Corrections and Alterations, according to Rules stated on pages 497, 498.

Popular glory is a perfect coquette; her lovers must <sup>of</sup> <sub>^</sub>feel every inquietude, indulge every caprice | and <sup>^</sup> <sub>^</sub>and <sup>^</sup> <sub>^</sub>perhaps at last be jilted with the bargain. <sup>into</sup> <sup>run on</sup>

True glory, on the other hand, resembles a woman of <sup>rom.</sup> <sup>9/</sup> sense: her admirers must play no tricks; they feel no <sup>ital.</sup> <sup>20</sup> great anxiety, for they are sure in the end of being rewarded in proportion to their merit. [I know not how <sup>N.P.</sup> <sup>11</sup> to turn so trite a sub<sup>^</sup>ject out of the beaten road of <sup>28</sup> <sup>○</sup> common place, except by illustrating it, rather <sup>23</sup> <sup>stet.</sup> <sup>16</sup> by the assistance of my judgment than my memory, and instead <sup>26</sup> <sup>tr.</sup> of making reflections by telling a story. <sup>29</sup> <sup>^</sup> A [Chinese, who had long studied the works of <sup>27</sup> <sup>indent</sup> Confucius, who knew fourteen thousand words, and could <sup>28</sup> <sup>sm. caps.</sup> read a great part of every book that came <sub>^</sub>his way, once <sup>29</sup> <sup>the characters of</sup> took it into his head to travel into Europe, and observe <sup>21</sup> <sup>loc.</sup> the customs of a people in the arts of refining upon every pleasure. Upon his arrival at amsterdam, his <sup>23</sup> <sup>cap.</sup> passion for letters naturally led him to a bookseller's <sup>24</sup> <sup>^</sup> <sup>25</sup> <sup>^</sup> shop; and as he could speak Dutch a little he civilly <sup>26</sup> <sup>^</sup> <sup>27</sup> <sup>tr.</sup> asked the bookseller for the works for the immortal <sup>28</sup> <sup>tr.</sup> Ilixiou. The bookseller assured him he had never <sup>29</sup> <sup>○</sup> heard the book mentioned before. "What! have you never heard of that immortal poet, <sub>^</sub>returned the other, <sup>30</sup> <sup>^</sup> much surprised, <sub>^</sub>that light of the eyes, that favourite of <sup>31</sup> <sup>^</sup> kings, that rose of perfection! I suppose you know no <sup>32</sup> <sup>^</sup> thing of the immortal Fipsihihi, second cousin to the <sup>33</sup> <sup>^</sup> moon?" "Nothing at all indeed, sir," returned <sup>34</sup> <sup>^</sup> the other. "Alas! <sub>^</sub>cries our traveller, <sub>^</sub>to what purpose <sup>35</sup> <sup>^</sup> then has one of these fasted to death, and the other <sup>36</sup> <sup>^</sup> offered him himself up as a sacrifice to the Tartarean <sup>37</sup> <sup>^</sup> enemy to gain a renown which has never travelled be- <sup>38</sup> <sup>^</sup> yond the precincts of China.

A whom he thought not every much inferior even to his own countrymen

The Author's Proof after the corrections marked on page 499 have been made :

Popular glory is a perfect coquette ; her lovers must toil, feel every inquietude, indulge every caprice, and perhaps at last be jilted into the bargain. True glory, on the other hand, resembles a woman of sense : her admirers must play no tricks ; they feel no great anxiety, for they are sure *in the end* of being rewarded in proportion to their merit.

I know not how to turn so trite a subject out of the beaten road of common place, except by illustrating it, rather by the assistance of my memory than my judgment, and instead of making reflections by telling a story.

A Chinese who had long studied the works of CONFUCIUS, who knew the characters of fourteen thousand words, and could read a great part of every book that came in his way, once took it into his head to travel into Europe, and observe the customs of a people whom he thought not very much inferior even to his own countrymen in the arts of refining upon every pleasure. Upon his arrival at Amsterdam, his passion for letters naturally led him to a bookseller's shop ; and as he could speak a little Dutch, he civilly asked the bookseller for the works of the immortal Ilixifou. The bookseller assured him he had never heard the book mentioned before. "What! have you never heard of that immortal poet," returned the other, much surprised, "that light of the eyes, that favorite of kings, that rose of perfection! I suppose you know nothing of the immortal Fipsihihi, second cousin to the moon?" "Nothing at all indeed, sir," returned the other. "Alas!" cries our traveller, "to what purpose then has one of these fasted to death, and the other offered himself up as a sacrifice to the Tartarean enemy to gain a renown which has never travelled beyond the precincts of China."

**(3) Avoid Egotism.**—In certain kinds of newspaper articles, especially personal and literary criticisms, there has lately been a growing affectation of the use of "I" and "me" and "my," instead of the "we" and "us" and "our" hitherto generally adopted by editors. At present it seems an affectation, and in newspaper work is not to be recommended, especially to young writers. But in using the "we" care must be taken :

(a) Not to extend the plural use beyond the possessive.

Thus, we would not say, "You, Mary, shall do this yourselves," nor should the editorial writer say, "We ourselves made the tenth." The sentences should be: "You, Mary, shall do this yourself," "We ourself made the tenth."

Correct the following :

The judge is a glorious sailor as well as jurist, and we would gladly trust our lives with him on the most dangerous seas.—*New York Standard*.

(b) To avoid ambiguous expressions.

A little book of information for foreign travellers, issued by E. M. Jenkins, contains this sentence :

A remedy recommended by many, and thoroughly believed in by our wife, is a mixture of glycerine and collodion.

This reminds one of the Mrs. Brown asking for credit at a dry-goods store, who, when her name was not recognized by the clerk, said, with scarcely justifiable ellipsis, "Why, don't you know me? I am Tompkins & Brown's wife."

(c) To use the "we" only in newspaper articles of an editorial character.

Even newspaper letters are now written commonly in the singular, while in books, essays, sermons, and public addresses the best usage is pronouncedly in favor of the singular form, when the author speaks of himself apart from his readers. This last qualification is necessary, because in most instances where the pronoun is in the first person the author is carrying along his audience with him, or speaking of general usage. Thus we should say "I have been led to give special study to this subject," where the reference is manifestly to the speaker as an individual; but "we should say," as at the beginning of this sentence, where the meaning is that any intelligent person would say so.

(d) Make as few references to yourself as possible.

In narration of what one has done or seen, one must speak of one's self, and should do it naturally and unaffectedly (see pages 140, 142, 145, 197); sometimes vividness is added to an illustration or an anecdote by mentioning the speaker's part in it; but as a general rule, statements and arguments should be cast in impersonal form. The writer should aim to fix the reader's attention on the thought, not on himself.

**(4) Do not be Discouraged by Rebuffs.—**

Probably most experienced writers would advise a young person not to write for publication, believing that ninety-nine of every hundred will write nothing worth reading, and that the hundredth will be so impelled to write that no discouragement will prevent him. And it may be said without qualification that for getting a livelihood almost every other field offers more inducements than literature. In the first place, it is difficult to get started, as witness the experience told on pages 88, 89; and, in the second place, the money reward in the higher walks of literature bears no proportion to that attained for corresponding eminence in other vocations. The professional literary man is usually a failure, but finds no great prizes awaiting him if he happens to succeed.

So one might better hoe corn or make bonnets than write poems for a living; but it does not follow that one who has tastes in that direction should not exercise them in writing, and test them in trying to get the writing into print. Nor should the fact that a dozen editors decline it make the author ashamed to offer the manuscript to a thirteenth. Usually it will be well before offering it to any publisher to go to a friend whose judgment and whose frankness can be trusted, and be sure of his indorsement before it is offered at all; but if it is vouched for emphatically by some one who ought to know what is worth printing, don't let your light go out because the editor of the *Squashtown Bugle* or of the *Pacific Review* declines it. Keep trying, keep trying; but in the meantime don't let your bread and butter be dependent on it.

A correspondent of the *Boston Transcript* tells about James Russell Lowell's playing a joke upon the *Atlantic*. He wrote an article called the "Essence of American Humor," which was said

by friends to whom he read it to be among the best of his writings. "He employed some one to copy it," says the correspondent, "and signed it 'W. Perry Paine,' and sent it to the *Atlantic*, with the request that, as it was a maiden effort, the editor would give an opinion in writing to said Paine. He waited a fortnight, but heard nothing from his paper, when, being in Boston, he dropped into the office of the *Atlantic*, and, meeting James T. Fields, adroitly turned the conversation upon humor, and remarked it was singular so little was written upon the subject. Fields replied, 'We get a great deal of manuscript on humor, but it is so poor that we cannot use it. I threw into the waste-basket the other day a long screed christened the "Essence of American Humor," which should have been styled the "Essence of Nonsense," for a more absurd farrago of stuff I have never seen.' Lowell, much to the surprise of the editor, burst into a roar of laughter and informed Mr. Fields of the authorship of the article. The editor turned all colors and swore it was one of Lowell's jokes. 'Indeed it is,' responded Lowell, 'and the best joke I ever played. I never thought highly of my scribbling, but I didn't believe it was the most ridiculous farrago of stuff you had ever seen.' By way of self-defence, Fields declared he did not read the thing, but that he did not believe that a man who signed his first name with an initial and the second full could write for the *Atlantic*. That was about as ingenious an excuse as he could make for his partiality."

(5) **Copyrights** are easily obtained. It is only necessary (a) to have printed upon a sheet of paper the title of the article or book, (b) to forward the same to "The Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C.," (c) enclosing one dollar (whereupon the copyright will be entered and a copy sent you), and finally, when the article or book is published, (d) to send two copies to the Librarian, for deposit in the Library at Washington. A copyright thus secured is valid for twenty-eight years, and may then be renewed for another fourteen.





PART V.  
ORATORY



## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### **Preparation for the Press.**

1. *Make your manuscript legible*, p. 492.
2. *Read your proof*, p. 493.

### **HOW TO CORRECT PROOF**, p. 497.

3. *Avoid egotism*, p. 500.

*In using the WE care must be taken :*

- a. *Not to extend the plural use beyond the possessive*, p. 500.
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  - d. *To make few references to self*, p. 501.
4. *Do not be discouraged by rebuffs*, p. 502.
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## PART V.

### *THE ORATION.*

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#### CHAPTER XXVI.

##### ELOQUENCE.

The object of rhetoric is persuasion,—of logic, conviction,—of grammar, significancy.  
—COLERIDGE.

De Quincey divides all literature into two classes—the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. The function of the first is to teach; the function of the second is to move.

For the best definition which I think can be given of Eloquence is, the art of speaking in such a manner as to obtain the end for which we speak.—BLAIR.

The word Eloquence in its greatest latitude denotes that art or talent by which the discourse is adapted to its end. "The best orator is he that so speaks as to instruct, to delight, and to move the minds of his hearers." \*—CAMPBELL.

**A new element** enters into the construction of the Oration. The fundamental purpose of Conversation is to entertain, of Letter-writing to inform, of the Essay to interest. The Oration must entertain, must inform, must interest; but it must do more, it must *persuade*. A speech has a purpose, and it is or is not a good speech according as it does or does not effect that purpose. It may be wise and witty and weighty, but if it does not move the audience it is a failure. The essayist or the poet may feel

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\* Optimus est orator qui dicendo animos audientium et docet, et delectat, et per-movet.—CICERO.

inly assured that his work is worthy; that though neglected now, it will some time be recognized as a masterpiece. The orator has no such solace. His speech is for the moment and the occasion of its delivery; if it fails then, it is a failure forever.

These two varieties of power are illustrated in the styles of Daniel Webster and Rufus Choate. Both were powerful speakers; but Webster was the superior, because of his superior power of selection. Much as one is dazzled by Choate's marvellous command of vocabulary, still one cannot avoid thinking of his style in the reading. That always indicates a defect. An absolutely perfect style attracts no attention to itself. Criticism of it is an afterthought. Members of the Boston bar all alike yielded to the spell of Choate's rhetoric; yet, in the very act of admiring, they found time to note that he "drove the substantive and six," alluding to the multitude of adjectives which he harnessed to a noun. Men with tears coursing down their cheeks, in listening to his sonorous periods in his eulogy upon Webster, yet slyly made a memorandum that they would count the words in some of those periods when they should be printed, and afterward remarked that one of them was the longest but one in the English language. Who ever heard of any such arithmetical criticism of Webster's reply to General Hayne of South Carolina? When Choate spoke, men said, "What a marvellous style. How beautiful, how grand, how immense his vocabulary, how intricate his combinations, how adroit his sway over the mother-tongue." When Webster spoke, men said, "He will gain his case." Webster's vocabulary was much more limited than that of Choate, but he had a much sterner power of selection and rejection. His command of language was like Darwin's law of species in the struggle for existence—only that lived which deserved to live.—PHELPS.

**Adaptation** to the audience and the occasion is therefore the prime consideration.

Nothing merits the name of eloquent or beautiful which is not suited to the occasion, and to the persons to whom it is addressed.—BLAIR.

Universally indeed in the arguments used as well as in the appeals to the feelings, a consideration must be had of the hearers, whether they are learned or ignorant,—of this or that profession,—nation,—character, etc., and the address must be adapted to each; so that there can be no excellence in writing or speaking, in the abstract; nor can we any more pronounce on the eloquence of any composition than upon the wholesomeness of a medicine, without knowing for whom it is intended.—**WHATELY.**

Even the common people are better judges of argument and good sense than we sometimes think them; and upon any question of business, a plain man, who speaks to the point, without art, will generally prevail over the most artful speaker who deals in flowers and ornaments, rather than in reasoning.—**BLAIR.**

In applauding an orator, we usually applaud ourselves. He says what we were just ready to say; we seem to have suggested the idea.

The deliberate expression of human thought will always assume a form supposed to be adapted to the intelligence, the temper, the tastes, and the aims of those to whom it is addressed. He who speaks to an audience composed of men of one class, of one profession, of one party, or of one sect, will use a narrower vocabulary, a more restricted or a more select dialect, than he who expects to be heard by a more various and comprehensive circle; and a writer who appeals to a whole people, who seeks to convince the understanding or enlist the sympathies of a nation, must adopt a diction, employ arguments, and resort to illustrations, which shall, in their turn, suit the comprehension and awaken the interest of men of every class and of every calling.—**MASSE.**

**Special care** must be taken to exclude from popular speeches certain features, which Abbott has thus classified:

(a) *Considerations that are subtle or far-fetched.*—Though an audience may applaud these if they are skilfully presented, they will be practically guided by plainer and coarser arguments.

(b) *Language and imagery that are subtle or pedantic.*—In Taylor's "Edwin the Fair," the Pedant, in addressing an audience of monks, begins figuratively—

On Mount Olympus with the Muses nine  
I ever dwell.

Upon which the cry is—

He doth confess it, lo!  
He doth confess it! Fagots and a stake!  
He is a heathen; shall a heathen speak?

So when in debate, in reply to the argument of an opponent that his client is a man of letters, a speaker retorts, "Yes, a man of three letters," the retort is lost on those who do not happen to know that this phrase is the translation of the Latin euphemism for thief, *homo trium litterarum* (f u r).

(c) *Considerations alien to the ways of thinking of the assembly addressed.*—Thus it has been said in the House of Commons of a scheme laid before it by a philosopher, "It is not of our atmosphere." For the same reason it has been remarked that lawyers seldom succeed in the House of Commons; and Erskine, the greatest of advocates, excited nothing but contempt in Pitt, who ruled the House of Commons. Hence, also, the kind of oratory which suits a jury—*i.e.*, an unskilled audience—differs from that which is likely to convince a judge; *i.e.*, a skilled auditor.

(d) *Considerations of a higher moral tone than is likely to be appreciated by the assembly.*—A speaker may feel it his duty to urge such considerations, but they are not oratorical. An interesting example of oratory, ineffective for this reason, is the speech in justification of the murder of Cæsar, attributed by Shakspeare to Brutus. It appeals to abstract principles of morality quite beyond the comprehension of the crowd, and therefore excites nothing but a cold respect for the speaker. Then follows Antony, with an appeal to feelings, some good, some bad, but actually present in the minds of the audience, and excites them to frenzy.

A little boy was shown the picture of the martyrs thrown to the lions. He startled his friends by shouting: "Ma! O Ma! Just look at that poor little lion way behind there. He won't get any."

There are audiences that from abstract discussion draw reflections far from those intended.

It is not by his own taste, but by the taste of the fish that the angler is determined in his choice of bait.—MACAULAY.

(e) *Imagery, phraseology, and rhythm, too rich and exquisite to be readily appreciated.*—Specimens have been given above of the highest eloquence of English prose. Scarcely one of them belongs to oratory as here defined; that is, scarcely one of them would be tolerated in the House of Commons, or in a law court. Students must not be misled by the speeches of Burke so as to suppose that the richness and ingenuity of his style is properly

oratorical. Burke was, in fact, little listened to in the House of Commons. The true oratorical style is much less elaborate and ingenious. The following is a specimen of the manner of Fox, the most powerful of English orators :

"We must keep Bonaparte for some time longer at war, as a state of probation! Gracious God, sir, is war a state of probation? Is peace a rash system? Is it dangerous for nations to live in amity with each other? Are your vigilance, your policy, your common powers of observation, to be extinguished by putting an end to the horrors of war? Cannot this state of probation be as well undergone without adding to the catalogue of human sufferings? But we must *pause!* What! must the bowels of Great Britain be torn out, her best blood spilt, her treasure wasted, that you may make an experiment? Put yourselves—oh, that you would put yourselves in the field of battle, and learn to judge of the sort of horrors that you excite! In former wars a man might at least have some feeling, some interest, that served to balance in his mind the impressions which a scene of carnage and of death must inflict. If a man had been present at the battle of Blenheim, for instance, and had inquired the motive of the battle, there was not a soldier engaged who could not have satisfied his curiosity, and even perhaps allayed his feelings—they were fighting to repress the uncontrolled ambition of the *Grand Monarque*. But if a man were present now at a field of slaughter, and were to inquire for what they were fighting, 'Fighting?' would be the answer, 'they are not fighting, they are *pausing*.' 'Why is that man expiring? why is that other writhing in agony? what means this implacable fury?' The answer must be, 'You are quite wrong, sir; you deceive yourself. They are not fighting. Do not disturb them; they are merely *pausing*. This man is not expiring with agony, that man is not dead: he is only pausing! They are not angry with one another: they have now no cause of quarrel; but their country thinks there should be a pause. All that you see, sir, is nothing like fighting: there is no harm, nor cruelty, nor blood-hed in it whatever: it is nothing more than a *political pause!* It is merely to try an experiment, to see whether Bonaparte will not behave himself better than heretofore; and in the meantime we have agreed to a pause in pure friendship!' And is this the way, sir, that you are to show yourselves the advocates of order? You take up a system calculated to uncivilize the world, to trample on religion, to stifle in the heart not merely the generosity of noble sentiment, but the affections of a social nature, and in the prosecution of this system you spread terror and desolation around you.

What is chiefly to be remarked in this passage is: (1) the simplicity and homeliness of the thought it expresses; (2) the carelessness of the language and the complete absence of rhythm, the orator evidently beginning his sentences without knowing how he would end them. To these characteristics it owes very much of its persuasiveness. What you are asked to believe is not anything paradoxical, and the language used is so direct and natural that you suspect no artifice.

**The character** of the speaker is also a powerful consideration. We permit ourselves to be entertained,

informed, and interested by almost any one that has the requisite intellectual ability; but we are slow to be persuaded by those whom we do not respect.

One thing is certain, and I shall hereafter have occasion to illustrate it more fully, that without possessing the virtuous affections in a strong degree, no man can attain eminence in the sublime parts of eloquence.—BLAIR.

It may be objected that bad men have been great orators. It would be more exact to say that most such men have had within them the capacity for distinguished probity, but that they have fallen through moral weakness. Such a man sees the right way, and can still point it out to an audience, though he no longer follows it; while a naturally bad man, having never seen it, unconsciously betrays his ignorance of it. Hence weak men do more mischief than bad men; for their sympathy with all that is true and noble gives them an influence over the good that the bad man could never establish, and which they betray.

It may be urged that to adapt one's self to the audience is a sort of duplicity; but this view has been well refuted, as follows:

Much declamation may be heard in the present day against expediency, as if it were not the proper object of a deliberative assembly, and as if it were pursued only by the unprincipled. And this kind of declamation is represented as a sign of superior moral rectitude; though in truth it implies very unsound morality, in any one who is not led into it through mere confusion of thought and inaccuracy of language.—WHATELY.

**Vanity**, always a weakness, is in oratory unpardonable.

It is a peculiarity in the rhetorical art that in it, more than in any other, vanity has a direct and immediate tendency to interfere with the proposed object. Excessive vanity may indeed in various ways prove an impediment to success in other pursuits; but in the endeavor to persuade, all wish to appear excellent in that art operates as a hinderance. A poet, a statesman, a general, etc., though extreme covetousness of applause may mislead them, will,

however, attain their respective ends certainly not the less for being admired as excellent in poetry, politics, or war; but the orator attains his end the better the less he is regarded as an orator. If he can make the hearers believe that he is not only a stranger to all unfair artifice, but even destitute of all persuasive skill whatever, he will persuade them the more effectually, and if there ever could be an absolutely perfect orator, no one would, at the time at least, discover that he was so. . . .

It is important to remark that an orator is bound as such, not merely on moral but (if such an expression may be used) on rhetorical principles, to be mainly and indeed exclusively intent on carrying his point; not on gaining approbation or even avoiding censure, except with a view to that point. He should, as it were, adopt as a motto the reply of Themistocles to the Spartan commander Eurybiades, who lifted his staff to chastise the earnestness with which his own opinion was controverted: "Strike, but hear me."

I would not indeed undertake to maintain (like Quintilian) that no one can be an orator who is not a virtuous man; but there certainly is a kind of moral excellence implied in that renunciation of all effort after display, in that forgetfulness of self, which is absolutely necessary, both in the manner of writing and in the delivery, to give the full force to what is said.—WHATELY.

Look at Dogberry, anxious to be written down an ass, and proving his donkeyhood by utter unconsciousness of it. Look at Falstaff, on the other hand, laughing at himself and stopping the laughter of others when he says, "I do begin to perceive I am made an ass." And it is not only the final test of donkeyhood, but goes down to the depths of life. Shakespeare is very fond of such phrases as these: "The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool." "The worst is not as long as we can say, This is the worst." "I am not very sick since I can reason of it."—DALLAS.

**Sincerity** is imperatively demanded.

Universally a writer or speaker should endeavor to maintain the appearance of expressing himself not as if he wanted to say something, but as if he had something to say.—WHATELY.

Asked what was the secret of his success in public debate, President Lincoln replied: "I always assume that my audience are in many things wiser than I am, and I say the most sensible thing I can to them. I never found that they did not understand me."



I know that young people, on purpose to train themselves to the art of speaking, imagine it useful to adopt that side of the question under debate which to themselves appears the weakest, and to try what figure they can make upon it. But I am afraid this is not the most improving education for public speaking; and that it tends to form them to a habit of flimsy and trivial discourse.—BLAIR.

If at least that man is to be accounted the most perfect orator who (as Cicero lays down) can speak the best and most persuasively on *any* question whatever that may arise, it may fairly be doubted whether a *first-rate man can be a first-rate orator*. He may indeed speak admirably in a matter he has well considered: but when any *new* subject or new point is started in the course of a debate, though he may take a juster view of it at the first glance, on the exigency of the moment, than any one else could, he will not fail—as a man of more superficial cleverness would—to perceive how impossible it must be to do full justice to a subject demanding more reflection and inquiry; nor can he therefore place himself fully on a level in such a case with one of shallower mind, who being in *all* cases less able to look beneath the surface of things, obtains at the glance the best view *he* can take of *any* subject, and therefore can display, without any need of artifice, that easy unembarrassed confidence which can never be with equal effect assumed. To speak perfectly well, in short, a man must feel that he has got to the *bottom* of the subject; and to feel this on occasions where from the nature of the case it is impossible he can really have done so, is inconsistent with the character of great profundity.—WHAELY.

**The Funny Man** can never be an orator. He may amuse us, but we do not let him persuade us. We yield our judgment only to the speaker who is thoroughly in earnest.

There are things incompatible with unction, such as wit, an analysis too strict, a tone too dictatorial, logic too formal, irony, the use of language too secular or too abstract, a form too literary; for unction supposes abundance, overflow, fluidity, pliability.—VINET.

The pathetic and the facetious differ not only in subject and effect, as will appear upon the most superficial review of what has been said, but also in the manner of imitation. In this the man of humor descends to a minuteness which the orator disdains. The former will often successfully run into downright mimicry, and exhibit peculiarities in voice, gesture, and pronunciation, which in the other would be intolerable. The reason of the difference is this: That we may divert, by exciting scorn and contempt, the individual must be exposed: that we may move by interesting the more generous principles of humanity, the language and sentiment—not so much of the individual as of human nature must be displayed. So very different, or rather opposite, are these two in this respect, that there could not be a more effectual expedient for undoing the charm of the most affecting representation, than an attempt in the speaker to mimic the personal

angularities of the man for whom he desires to interest us. On the other hand, in the humorous, where the end is diversion, even overacting, if moderate, is not improper.—  
CAMPBELL.

**The Objection** to a predominance of the humorous in a public speaker is not to the humor but to the affectation, the bent of mind that seeks to look upon things not as they are, but as they may be made to seem laughable. When the wit is plainly subordinate to the thought, and employed not for itself but as the most forcible expression of the thought, it is the happiest element of perfection in a discourse, especially in discussion. (See page 81.)

Wit may sometimes be of service at the bar, especially in a lively reply, by which we may throw ridicule on something that has been said on the other side. But though the reputation of wit be dazzling to a young pleader, I would never advise him to rest his strength upon this talent. It is not his business to make an audience laugh, but to convince the judge; and seldom or never did any one rise to eminence in his profession by being a witty lawyer.—BLAIR.

**Moderation** is another essential quality, especially in enlisting the sympathies of the audience. Even when passion is aroused, and the orator seems to be sweeping his hearers along by the torrent of his fiery words, he will still be wary not to be more violent than their excitement warrants, remembering that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Reserve has great force. This devout and holy sobriety of expression is not merely a discipline worthy of being revered for its motive; it is a wise and wholesome economy. Feeling is exhausted by the expression of feeling. Never without an evident and impracticable miracle can the words of the poet respecting the magic cup be spoken of the soul:

And still the more the vase poured forth  
The more it seemed to hold.—OVID.

Reserved men, when that reserve is not the mark of sterility, preserve the strength of their soul just as temperate men preserve their bodily vigor. Nay, their very reserve is usually a pledge and a foundation of mental strength. Nothing moves us so deeply as a single word from the heart of one whose words are, from a sense of duty, few.—VINET.

M. Clemenceau, the French Minister, was devoid of enthusiasm and made no secret of his contempt for the imaginativeness and "gush" of the Southern orators. Once, after one of Gambetta's most impassioned speeches, Clemenceau was seen to wear a scornful expression. "Why, you must admit that it was a magnificent oration," expostulated M. Naquet. "It was incomplete," replied Clemenceau, dryly; "M. Gambetta should have accompanied himself on the guitar."

The following eulogy upon Justice Clifford, by Senator Davis, is an admirable example of moderation in a field of oratory where there is peculiar temptation to extravagance:

The members of the bar have come together to perform the sad duty of offering proper respect to the memory of the late Mr. Justice Nathan Clifford. It was my privilege to be associated with him on the bench for fifteen years, and it was my pleasure to know him closely during all that time, in the relations of an unbroken personal friendship. He was a pure jurist, who, as the profession know, was patient, scrupulous, faithful to every duty, and earnest to be right. Investigation to him was a labor of love, and industry was a recreation. Well equipped in the science of the law, a clear head and a wise judgment rarely failed to carry him to sound conclusions: and, whatever they might be, the court and bar accepted them always as the result of his honest convictions. As a citizen, his life was an example. As a patriot, he was eminent for devotion to free institutions. As a man, he was noted for the best qualities that challenge respect and admiration. As a friend, he was staunch and self-denying. His public services and his private virtues will long be cherished by a grateful public.

**Pungency** is the most manifest element of success in a public speaker. We yield our time reluctantly to one who does not seem to be giving us something to grasp; and we grasp only ideas that are clean-cut, vigorous, complete.

I do not think that so much harm is done by giving error to a child, as by giving truth in a lifeless form.—  
CHANNING.

An old man, asked how he liked a certain sermon, re-

plied, "I liked it very well, except that there was no pinch to it. I always like to have a little pinch to every sermon."

It has been said of the celebrated chancellor of England, Lord Somers, that he once delivered a speech in the House of Peers in the space of seven minutes, which was so replete with sense, wisdom, and intelligence, that the debate was closed on his resuming his seat, every one being satisfied that so wise a counsellor had embodied in his address all the information which was essential to the proper elucidation of the question then under consideration.—**MCQUEEN.**

**LORD BACON'S ORATORY.**—Yet there happened in my time one noble speaker who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language (where he could spare or pass by a jest) was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss. He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end.—**JOHNSON.**

**THE ORATORY OF DEMOSTHENES.**—He not only prompts to vigorous conduct, but he lays down the plan of that conduct; he enters into particulars; and points out, with great exactness, the measures of execution. This is the strain of these orations. They are strongly animated, and full of the impetuosity and fire of public spirit. They proceed in a continued strain of inductions, consequences, and demonstrations, founded on sound reason. The figures which he uses are never sought after, but always rise from the subject. He employs them sparingly, indeed, for splendor and ornament are not the distinctions of this orator's composition. It is an energy of thought peculiar to himself which forms his character and sets him above all others. He appears to attend much more to things than to words. We forget the orator and think of

the business. He warms the mind and impels to action. He has no parade and ostentation; no methods of insinuation; no labored introductions; but is like a man full of his subject, who, after preparing his audience by a sentence or two for hearing plain truths, enters directly on business.—BLAIR, i. 366.

There is the speaker who has nothing to say, and who says it; there is the speaker who has something to say, and who does not say it; and there is the speaker who has something to say, and who does say it.

The first *rites* one. It is provoking—considering the brevity of life—to have the time of a whole company wasted, its temper ruffled, and its mind hardened against something good by such an impertinence.

The second awakens a kind of pity. The heart must be hard indeed that is unmoved by an honest man—at least a man with no evil design—with knowledge or notions more or less valuable, vainly attempting to get them out. One feels a compassion akin to that which a whooping-cough awakens. You can only stand by, helpless; and if, in either case, you try a clap on the back, the chances are that you do more mischief than good.

The third excites a feeling of satisfaction, such satisfaction as one has in seeing a team well handled, and carried neatly round a corner, or a ship skillfully brought into her berth, or in watching a dexterous carver at the family table (mostly a lady) put a nice helping before every one, and yet appear to treat the noble bird with no rudeness, but rather with a sort of respectful tenderness that shrinks from disfiguring the form.

There are speakers who are all introduction. They are always coming up to their theme. It appears to be a kind of *ignis fatuus* to them. They are perpetually nearing it, but “the faithless phantom flies,” and they are shut off, or choked off, before they have overtaken it. You feel, in hearing, like the man who conscientiously believed he was to eat through the bill of fare, and who was weary but unsatisfied by the time he had got through the six kinds of soup at the top.

Others are all conclusion. They have “finally,” and “once more,” and “another remark,” and “it occurs to them to add,” and “before sitting down they wish to express,” and in conclusion they have two or three “observations to offer.” This is the modern substitute for the rack. It tortures one from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. It goes to the very marrow of one's bones. You envy those who, unrestrained by fear or shame, can go out. You inquire mentally, Is this a free country? You feel as the peasant must have felt, who stood by the river to cross when the water had all flowed past; and when your fluent and gifted tormentor really ends, you are too exhausted to have a lively feeling of pleasure; and yet the sickly signs of satisfaction you show at his having finished at all, he probably takes as a tribute to his powers.

There is the gushing speaker. He has emotions “always on hand.” His “Oh's” and “Ah's” fall like rain. He is a standing interjection. Sometimes he is violently enamored of everybody present. Even the doorkeeper hardly escapes. He singles out classes, and individuals, and tells the audience the particular kind of affection he has for them, its duration, and the occasion of its birth. Such speakers are the “free-lovers” of the platform. They ought to be frowned upon. They use up the tender words of goodwill, and do not leave a man phrases enough unvulgarized by their cheap emotion, unsmearcd by their treacle, in which to express honest love to his wife, his friend, or his children.

There is the pleasing speaker—dress faultless, words clean-cut, neat and select, no conviction to make any one uncomfortable—you could not disagree with him if you tried.

The crystal streams with pleasing murmurs creep :  
 but the man has sense enough to stop before—as in Pope's lines—the hearer is  
 Threatened, not in vain, with sleep.

He makes a lovely "chairman," and is good at a presentation, and returns thanks with extraordinary grace of words. The world is much indebted to the "pleasing" speaker. He lubricates the wheels of social life, and puts men in good temper.

There is the gymnastic speaker. He acts all he says, and more. He is to be seen, like the dear little pets at table, rather than heard. His hands, his limbs, his walk, his running about, keep at least four eyes occupied. He gives some enjoyment to a certain order of mind, of the same kind afforded to children by the monkeys.

So does the flashing speaker. He sparkles—without any needful connection between the gleams—any more than between the flashes of sheet-lightning. When he has made a reputation, the hearers wait and watch for the displays, and even discount them, and when he has burnt out there is no more impression left than by fire-works in the sky. "We have seen, admired, applauded; now let us go home."

There is finally the heavy, generally sensible, speaker, who has ideas more or less clear or valuable in which he believes, and manages, more or less clumsily, to get out. Of this class of speaker, the writer knows little with certainty, for we do, as a rule, the least know ourselves. But on general principles it may be confidently alleged that if one has thoughts—not imaginations or notions of them (which are to thoughts as clouds to a glass of water)—he is to be blamed if he does not take pains to overcome difficulties in the way of uttering them: for they can be overcome: and the human tongue, under proper management, is equal to the expression of all practical and really serviceable ideas.—JOHN HALL.

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## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

### Eloquence.

#### Persuasion, p. 505.

##### ADAPTATION, p. 506.

Special care must be taken to exclude:

- a. Subtile and far-fetched considerations, p. 507.
- b. Subtile and pedantic language and imagery, p. 507.
- c. Considerations alien to the ways of thinking of the audience, p. 508.
- d. Considerations of too high a moral tone, p. 508.
- e. Imagery, phraseology, and rhythm too rich, p. 508.

##### THE CHARACTER OF THE SPEAKER, p. 509.

Vanity, p. 510.

Sincerity, p. 511.

The funny man, p. 512.

The objection to the humorous, p. 513.

##### MODERATION, p. 513.

##### PUNGENCY, p. 514.

Lord Bacon's oratory, p. 515.

The oratory of Demosthenes, p. 515.





## CHAPTER XXVII.

### ARGUMENT.

**Argument** implies a point at issue, and will be more or less prominent in oratory according as the purpose of the speaker is more or less directed toward inducing his hearers to take certain action.

Thus the lawyer's plea is intended to clear his client, and will be almost purely an argument that justice demands it; while the after-dinner speaker, whose purpose is mainly to promote good feeling among those present, will avoid anything that might seem an effort to proselyte those present to views of his own.

Compare pages 62, 67, 74.

*The division* of the argumentative oration into parts is usually as follows: (1) The Introduction, (2) The Narration, (3) The Proposition, (4) The Argument, (5) The Conclusion.

**How prominent** this division (or Partition, as it is often called) should be made to the hearer, is a matter of some discussion, but all agree that the analysis should be distinct to the speaker.

If formal partitions give the sermon less of the oratorical appearance, they render it, however, more clear, more easily apprehended, and, of course, more instructive to the bulk of hearers, which is always the main object to be kept in view. The heads of a sermon are great assistances to the memory and recollection of a hearer. They serve also to fix his attention. They enable him more easily to keep pace with the progress of the discourse; they



give him pauses and resting-places, where he can reflect on what has been said and look forward to what is to follow. They are attended with this advantage, too, that they give the audience the opportunity of knowing, beforehand, when they are to be relieved from the fatigue of attention, and thereby make them follow the speaker more patiently. . . . If his heads be well chosen, his marking them out and distinguishing them, in place of impairing the unity of the whole, renders it more conspicuous and complete, by showing how all the parts of a discourse hang upon one another and tend to one point.—BLAIR.

On the other hand, Campbell remarks that the cohesion of the parts in a cabinet or other piece of furniture seems always the more complete, the less the pegs and tacks so necessary to effect it are exposed to view.\*

Cicero did not, as some have asserted, totally condemn the practice of announcing the partition. He only condemned such long ones as burden the memory of the hearers, and being so confined to them as never to indulge in a digression. Quintilian would have us always announce it.

Fénélon's opinion concerning divisions is best expressed in his

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\* This figure is used by Whately in another connection as follows:

"It happens, unfortunately, that Johnson's style is particularly easy of imitation, even by writers utterly destitute of his vigor of thought; and such imitators are intolerable. They bear the same resemblance to their model that the armor of the Chinese, as described by travellers, consisting of thick quilted cotton covered with stiff glazed paper, does to that of the ancient knights; equally glittering, and bulky, but destitute of the temper and firmness which was its sole advantage. At first sight, indeed, this kind of style appears far from easy of attainment, on account of its being remote from the colloquial, and having an elaborately artificial appearance; but in reality, there is nothing less difficult to acquire. To string together *substantives*, connected by conjunctions, which is the characteristic of Johnson's style, is, in fact, the rudest and clumsiest mode of expressing our thoughts: we have only to find *names* for our ideas, and then put them together by connectives, instead of interweaving, or rather *fitting* them together, by a due admixture of verbs, participles, prepositions, etc. So that this way of writing, as contrasted with the other, may be likened to the primitive rude carpentry, in which the materials were united by coarse external implements, pins, nails, and cramps, when compared with that art in its most improved state, after the invention of dovetail joints, grooves, and mortises, when the junctions are effected by forming properly the extremities of the pieces to be joined so as at once to consolidate and conceal the juncture."

It may be suggested that there is in the Eastlake style a modern revolt against the excessive concealment of the means by which the parts of a piece of furniture are made to cohere; and that taste just now requires not only that a chair should be strong but that it should look strong, the sources of its strength being manifest.

comment on the partition above quoted. "When," says he, "we choose to divide a subject, we should do it plainly and naturally. We should make such a division as is all contained in the subject itself—a division which elucidates and methodizes the matter, which may be easily remembered, and at the same time help to recall all the rest; in brief, a division which exhibits the extent of the subject and of its parts. Exactly the opposite is the course of this man here, who endeavors to dazzle you at the outset, to put you off with three epigrams or three enigmas, which he turns and turns again so dexterously that you fancy you are witnessing some tricks of legerdemain."—HERVEY.

**METHOD.**—It is only in the act of composition, and occasionally in the course of delivery, that an arbitrary, mixed, or cryptic arrangement will often be wisely adopted. Of one of the czars of Russia, Dr. Watts relates that when he first learned the art of war he practised all the rules of circumvallation and contravallation at the siege of a certain city of Laponia; and he passed so much of his time in mathematical approaches that he wasted the season for taking the town.

Some never acquire a free method, because in their minds the subject is bound up with rigid notions of rhetorical unity. Thinking thus, they adjust almost all the parts of their sermons in such an order that the principal subject or proposition shall be continually kept before the hearer. Their plans are apt to resemble the pine or fir, the main body of which grows straight up to the very top of the tree, while branches shoot out on its sides at regular intervals; and there are, it must be allowed, certain subjects, *e. g.*, those of the argumentative and demonstrative kind, which sometimes derive considerable energy and gracefulness from the constant visibility of the stem proposition. But still it is to be remembered that there is also a unity of amplification and of various applications. Almost all fruit trees divide the trunk among the first branches, and sacrifice height and symmetry of stem, limb, and twig to that rotundity which exposes the greatest amount of fruit to the ripening weather and the admiring eye. It is, therefore, by keeping the simplicity of our sermon ever before us that we acquire the truest unity, and, at the same time, that art of deceiving art, of which Venantius Fortunatus writes.

No man can methodize thoroughly well whose mind has not been disciplined to habits of sound thinking; for "method," as Coleridge observes, "is a power or spirit of the intellect, pervading all that it does, rather than its tangible product." Nor is he likely to reduce any subject to a just method who has not a distinct, particular, and comprehensive knowledge thereof. But to learn to arrange a subject practically and popularly, we should add to all this much intercourse with men and considerable experience in public speaking.

But is not an analytic mind necessarily lacking in force? Believe it not. The tendency of method is exactly the opposite. By contributing to perspicuity and by reducing the whole subject to one view, it stimulates energy, sometimes to an extravagant degree. Massillon and Baxter were both analytic thinkers, and yet both wrote and spoke with a force that is Demosthenian. The latter studied the schoolmen chiefly, it would seem, because of their acuteness and skill in methodology. "And though," says he, "I know no man whose genius more abhorreth confusion instead of necessary distinction and method, yet I loathe the impertinent, useless art, and pretended precepts, and distinctions which

have no foundations in the matter." He somewhere says he never thought he understood anything until he could anatomize it. Method, therefore, as it belongs in germ and potentiality to the mind itself, so it is the most perfectly evolved by the most capacious and cultivated minds.—HERVEY.

**So important** is analysis, that the best writers recommend its practice upon themes of all kinds, whether or not they are to be spoken upon. The young speaker will find it an excellent habit when in public assemblies of any kind to reflect upon what he would say if he were called upon to speak, however impossible it may be that he should be called upon. In this way he will acquire readiness in seizing upon a tangible thought and in putting that thought into presentable form, that will some time prove of service.

It will also be found a most useful exercise for a beginner to practise—if possible under the eye of a judicious lecturer—the drawing out of a great number of such skeletons, more than he subsequently fills up; and likewise to practise the analyzing, in the same way, the composition of another, whether heard or read.—WHATELY.

Above all things, in divisions take care of putting anything in the first part which supposes the understanding of the second, or which obliges you to treat of the second to make the first understood; for by these means you will throw yourself into great confusion, and be obliged to make many tedious repetitions. You must endeavor to disengage the one from the other as well as you can; and when your parts are too closely connected with each other, place the most detached first, and endeavor to make that serve for a foundation to the explication of the second, and the second to the third; so that at the end of your explication the hearer may with a glance perceive, as it were, a perfect body, or a finished building; for one of the greatest excellences of a sermon is the harmony of its component parts, that the first leads to the second, the second serves to introduce the third; that they which go before excite a desire for those which are to follow; and, in a word, that the last has a special relation to all the others, in order to form in the hearers' minds a complete idea of the whole.—CLAUDE.

(1) **The Introduction** is the last part to be composed. (See page 328.)

The best authorities concur in the opinion that the exordium should not be chosen and planned until the principal matter of the sermon be selected and arranged. This is in accordance

with Cicero's example and advice: "Quod primum est dicendum postremum soleo cogitare." ("The last thing one finds out is what to put first."—Pascal.) Some forbid us to dream of the introduction until the rest of the discourse has been written. But Vinet thinks this mode of proceeding is not natural, as a good exordium prepares the reader to compose, as well as the congregation to hear. And yet he approves Cicero's method. If, however, we thus write our exordium, we are compelled to begin to arrange and to express those thoughts first which have occupied our thoughts the shortest time. Now, as a good exordium is confessedly very difficult to compose, and the success of the sermon so much depends upon its beginning, it is but fair to allow the preacher the longest possible time for pondering its materials and for making such changes in them as the composition of the rest may happen to suggest.—HERVEY.

The rule laid down by Cicero, not to compose the introduction first, but to consider first the main argument and let that suggest the exordium, is just and valuable; for otherwise, as he observes, seldom anything will suggest itself but vague generalities, "common" topics, as he calls them, *i. e.*, what would equally well suit several different compositions; whereas an introduction that is composed last will naturally spring out of the main subject and appear appropriate to it.—WHATELY.

Demosthenes and Cicero were in the habit of preparing at their leisure different introductions to be prefixed to their extemporaneous orations. They thus secured variety at the expense of pertinence. That kind of exordium which might be adapted to several causes was in Quintilian's time regarded with little favor, and was called *vulgare*, although he admits that it was not always avoided by the greatest orators. Some old rhetorician or other has compared such exordia to the sword used at the temple of Delphi, which served the double purpose of immolating the sacred victims and executing malefactors.—HERVEY.

**Sometimes** the introduction may be omitted, the speaker proceeding at once to the matter in hand.

Dean Swift, called upon to preach a charity sermon, was warned not to make it too long. So he chose for his text these words: "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." The dean, after looking around, and repeating his text in a more emphatic tone,

added, "My beloved friends, you hear the terms of the loan; and now, if you like the security, down with your dust." The result was a satisfactory collection.

Let the student bear well in mind that the greatest possible diversity requires him occasionally to proceed at once to the matter in hand.—And yet some brief premonition is almost always necessary, lest the people imagine, as Claude says, that the preacher is aiming to do with them what the angel did with the prophet, when he took him by the hair of the head and carried him in an instant from Judea to Babylon.—HERVEY.

**Conciliation** is the main purpose of an introduction. The speaker shows a certain presumption in coming before an audience to occupy their time, and he must placate them by showing that he appreciates the privilege, and that his effort will be to do his utmost to justify it. Hence he should be moderate in tone and modest in manner. If he can make some happy allusion to the place and time, especially to what has just been said, or to some circumstance fresh in the minds of his audience, he will gain attention the more readily because he will seem to rely rather on his wit than on his memory.

The exordium and the peroration are, according to Cicero, the two parts which are to be devoted to excitation. But Quintilian has made an important distinction as to the degrees of excitation which these two parts of a speech allow. "In the introduction the kind feelings of the judge should be touched but cautiously and modestly; while in the peroration we may give full scope to the pathetic." . . .

One principal object in an exordium is to gain and secure attention. Among the things that draw attention are reverence and modesty. Simeon advises his students to adopt such a tone of voice as they would naturally choose if they were speaking to persons older than themselves and to whom they owed reverence. Vinet would have the preacher even timid, but with this distinction of Marmontel, that he should be timid for himself but bold for his cause. Another way to make people give ear is to set out

with a popular saying, objection, difficulty, apparent contradiction, excuse or question, which is afterward to be disposed of. A fact or short narrative is sometimes sufficient to seize and enchain the minds of an audience. . . . Some are in the habit of formally asking attention. . . . The transition from the exordium to the proposition should be short and easy. For the reason that the matter of their introduction is either irrelevant or badly arranged, some preachers appear to leap a very broad chasm when they pass from their exordium; and a written or printed discourse of theirs seems, when read, not unlike a temple from which the portico has been separated by an earthquake.—HERVEY.

(2) **The Narration** (or Description, as it is sometimes called), should be presented with all the art of interesting suggested in the chapter on this form of composition (see pages 208 and following), but with this kept in mind, that the story is told not for its own sake, but to prepare the minds of the hearers for the proposition and arguments to follow. Hence only that need be told which will tend to make one's hearers prepared to hear the side one is about to present; though often this will require a frank presentation of circumstances that are, or seem to be, of contrary tendency.

(3) **The Proposition** usually precedes the Argument, and is to be stated distinctly (see page 318).

A proposition that is well known (whether easy to be established or not), and which contains nothing particularly offensive, should in general be stated at once, and the proofs subjoined; but one not familiar to the hearers, especially if it be likely to be unacceptable, should not be stated at the outset. It is usually better, in that case, to state the arguments first, or at least some of them, and then introduce the conclusion, thus assuming, in some degree, the character of an investigator. There is no question relating to arrangement more important than the present.—WHATELY.

(4) **The Argument** should sometimes begin with

refutation of the arguments of an opponent, or allaying of known prejudice on the part of the audience.

Refutation of Objections should generally be placed in the midst of the Argument; but nearer the beginning than the end.

If indeed very strong objections have obtained much currency or have been just stated by an opponent, so that what is asserted is likely to be regarded as paradoxical, it may be advisable to begin with a Refutation; but when this is not the case, the mention of Objections in the opening will be likely to give a paradoxical air to our assertion, by implying a consciousness that much may be said against it. If, again, all mention of objections be deferred till the last, the other arguments will often be listened to with prejudice by those who may suppose us to be overlooking what may be urged on the other side. Sometimes, indeed, it will be difficult to give a satisfactory refutation of the opposed opinions till we have gone through the arguments in support of our own; even in that case, however, it will be better to take some notice of them early in the Composition, with a promise of afterward considering them more fully, and refuting them. This is Aristotle's usual procedure.

A sophistical use is often made of this last rule, when the objections are such as cannot really be satisfactorily answered. The skilful sophist will often, by the promise of a triumphant Refutation hereafter, gain attention to his own statement, which, if it be made plausible, will so draw off the hearer's attention from the Objections, that a very inadequate fulfilment of that promise will pass unnoticed, and due weight will not be allowed to the Objections. . . .

The force of a refutation is often overrated: an argument which is satisfactorily answered ought merely to go for nothing; it is possible the conclusion drawn may nevertheless be true; yet men are apt to take for granted that the conclusion itself is disproved, when the arguments brought forward to establish it have been satisfactorily refuted; assuming, perhaps, when there is no ground for the assumption, that these are all the arguments that could be urged.—**WHATELY.**

**Frankness** in stating objections that are sure to be presented is always an element of strength.

On the above principle, that a weak argument is positively hurtful, is founded a most important maxim, that it is not only the fairest, but also the wisest plan to state objections in their full force; at least wherever there does exist a satisfactory answer to them; otherwise those who hear them stated more strongly than by the uncandid advocate who had undertaken to repel them, will naturally enough conclude that they are unanswerable. It is but momentary and ineffective triumph that can be obtained by manœuvres like those of Turennes's charioteer, who furiously chased the feeble stragglers of the army, and evaded the main front of the battle.

Such an honest avowal as I have been recommending, though it may raise at first a feeble and brief shout of exultation, will soon be followed by a general and increasing murmur of approbation. Uncandid as the world often is, it seldom fails to applaud the magnanimity of confessing a defect or a mistake, and to reward it with an increase of confidence. Indeed, this increased confidence is often rashly bestowed by a kind of over-generosity in the public, which is apt too hastily to consider the confession of an error as a proof of universal sincerity. Some of the most skilful sophists accordingly avail themselves of this, and gain credence for much that is false by acknowledging, with an air of frankness, some *one* mistake, which, like a tub thrown to a whale, they sacrifice for the sake of persuading us that they have committed only one error.—**WHATELY.**

**Objections** to the view presented must not be undervalued (see page 64).

On the whole, the arguments which it requires the greatest nicety of art to refute effectually (I mean for one who has truth on his side) are those which are so very weak and silly that it is difficult to make their absurdity more palpable than it is already.—**WHATELY.**

Cicero tells us that he always conversed at full length with every client who came to consult him; that he took care there



should be no witness to their conversation, in order that his client might explain himself more freely; that he was wont to start every objection, and to plead the cause of the adverse party with him, that he might come at the whole truth and be fully prepared on every point of the business; and that after his client had retired he used to balance all the facts with himself.—BLAIR.

In former times men knew by experience that the earth stands still, and the sun rises and sets. Common-sense taught them that there could be no antipodes, since men could not stand with their heads downward like flies on the ceiling. Experience taught the king of Bantam that water could not become solid.—WHATELY.

The Irish immigrant who wrote back to his brother to come over to a country where they had meat three times a week, was asked why he said that when he himself had meat every day. "Faith, an' would ye have him belave me a liar intirely?" he replied; and his native wit did not mislead him; he could convince his brother best by making his statement credible.

**Prejudice** is best overcome by showing that another view is preferable, without unnecessarily pointing out that the view now held is absurd.

Of course it is not meant that a refutation should ever appear (when that can be avoided), insufficient; that a conclusion should be left doubtful which we are able to establish fully. But in combating deep-rooted prejudices, and maintaining unpopular and paradoxical truths, the point to be aimed at should be to adduce what is sufficient, and not much more than is sufficient to prove your conclusion. If (in such a case) you can but satisfy men that your opinion is decidedly more probable than the opposite, you will have carried your point more effectually than if you go on much beyond this to demonstrate, by a multitude of the most forcible arguments, the extreme absurdity of thinking differently, till you have affronted the self-esteem of some and awakened the distrust of others. A French writer, M. Say, relates a story of some one who, for a wager, stood a whole day on one of the bridges of Paris, offering to sell a five-franc piece for one franc and (naturally) not finding a purchaser. Laborers who are employed in driving wedges into a block of wood are careful to use blows of no greater force than is just sufficient. If they strike too hard, the elasticity of the wood will throw out the wedge. . . .

Some, perhaps, conscious of having been the slaves or the supporters of such prejudices as are thus held up to contempt (not indeed by disdainful language, but simply by being placed in a very clear light), and of having overlooked truths which, when thus clearly explained or proved, appear perfectly evident even to a child, will consequently be stung by a feeling of shame passing off into resentment, which stops their ears against argument. They could have borne perhaps to change their opinion, but not so to change it as to tax their former opinion with the grossest folly. They would be so sorry to think they had been blinded to such an excess, and are so angry with him who is endeavoring

to persuade them to think so, that these feelings determine them not to think it.—**WHATELY.**

Hence the absurdity of the paradox that he who confesses a mistake merely shows that he is wiser to-day than he was yesterday; the fact that a man was mistaken yesterday, so far as it shows anything, indicates that he is likely to be mistaken to-day.

**Ridicule** is a most effective mode of refutation. Cleverly to burlesque an opponent's arguments will cover him with confusion.

It was a just opinion of Gorgias, and approved by Aristotle, that the serious argument of an adversary should be confounded by ridicule, and his ridicule by serious argument.—**CAMPBELL.**

He (Sydney Dobell) says: "To express is to carry out. To express a mind is to carry out that mind in some equivalent. By an equivalent I mean that product of an active mind which being presented to the same mind when passive, could restore the former state of activity." This seems to us to mean (if it means anything) that the full, verbal expression of any feeling—hate, for instance—would be such words as would arouse the feeling of hate in the mind that had originally felt it. But as this feeling, according to Mr. Dobell, is to be excited in the mind of whose active feeling it is an expression, it follows that the only possible judge of the perfect expression of a feeling is the person who expresses it, for he is the only one who can tell whether the words are adequate to re-express the feeling in his mind. Thus the only possible judge of a poem is the author, a conclusion which will be eagerly hailed by many unappreciated geniuses.—*Spectator*, July 1, 1876.

**Good Temper** must be maintained under any provocation (see pages 30, 77).

It is not unfrequently the case that persons who are participating in debate become flushed with irritation, and render ill-natured and splenetic replies to questions which may be propounded to them by a debater on the opposite side of the question to themselves. This is exceedingly impolitic. If a speaker cannot preserve his composure when such interrogatories are put to him he ought to refrain from any replication to them whatever. For a mere ebullition of bad temper, without being armed with the property of superior wit or repartee, places the speaker himself in a disadvantageous point of view before his audience, and sheds an enervating influence on his cause.—**MCQUEEN.**

Logic is the proper criterion of argument considered

in itself, and it is for Rhetoric only to apply and arrange the reasoning that logic provides. In general it may be said that the strongest arguments should come last, and that when circumstances make it necessary to put the strongest first, they should be recapitulated in reverse order. Of all rules it is most important to converge all one's power on the main point at issue. Ignore the non-essentials (see page 69), but let nothing swerve your mind or that of your hearers from the strong point on which you rely. "Know your fact; hug your fact."

Indeed, in any composition that is not very short, the most frequent and the most appropriate kind of conclusion is a recapitulation either of the whole or of part of the arguments that have been adduced.—WHATELY.

It is a weighty remark of Cicero that "it will be necessary to avoid letting it have the air of a childish display of memory; and he will best keep clear of that fault who does not recapitulate every trifle, but touches on each particular briefly and dwells on the more weighty and important points." Quintilian advises us to vary and enliven our enumerations with different figures, and cites as an excellent example Cicero's oration against Verres: "If your father himself were your judge what would he say when these things are proved against you?" and then enumerates the recapitulation. Maury is unsparing in his censure of enumerations such as were made in his day. He quotes in his favor the language of Cicero, who compares the orator that dryly and formally recapitulates to a serpent crawling round in a circle and biting his own tail.—HERVEY.

**Unity** is more important in oratory than in any other composition, yet it does not exclude occasional digression for legitimate ends.

The imagination is eminently a weariable faculty, eminently delicate and incapable of bearing fatigue; so that if we give it too many objects at a time to employ itself upon, or very grand ones for a long time together, it fails under the effort, becomes jaded,

exactly as the limbs do by bodily fatigue, and incapable of answering any farther appeal till it has had rest.—RUSKIN.

The effect of disorder in reasoning is sometimes grand and overwhelming, like that of an army scaling the walls of a city. Robert Hall's manner is an example of this. Foster compares his independent propositions to a number of separate and undisciplined savages. . . .

He who knows not how to wander knows not how to explore; and circumnavigators have changed the map of the world and greatly enlarged the domain of civilized nations, because furious gales swept them out of their course, drove them up and down, and finally wrecked them among the rocks of the unknown coast.

"I have observed," says John Bunyan ("Grace Abounding," 287) "that a word cast in by the bye hath done more execution in a sermon than all that was spoken besides." "He wanders from his subject," complained some critic of the late English preacher, John Gualter. "Yes," was the reply, "he wanders from his subject to the heart." . . .

The regressions of Demosthenes are more frequent and more natural. Lord Brougham, commenting upon a passage of his oration on the Crown, thus draws attention to them, and at the same time contrasts them with those of Fox. "Here is the same leading topic once more introduced; but introduced after new topics and fresh illustrations. The repetitions, the enforcement again and again of the same points, are a distinguishing feature of Demosthenes, and formed also one of the characteristics of Mr. Fox's great eloquence. The ancient, however, was incomparably more felicitous in this than the modern; for in the latter it often arose from carelessness, from ill-arranged discourse, from want of giving due attention, and from having once or twice attempted the topic and forgotten it, or perhaps from having failed to produce the desired effect. Now, in Demosthenes this is never the case; the early allusions to the subject of the repetition are always perfect in themselves, and would sufficiently have enforced the topic had they stood alone. But new matter afterward handled gave the topic new force and fresh illustration by presenting the point in a new light."—HERVEY.

(5) **The Conclusion** (or Peroration, as it is com-

monly called) is so important that even the extempore speaker is advised to be sure of very nearly the language he will use. It is the part that remains in the hearers' minds, and that more than any other affords the basis for estimate of the entire address. Many a noble speech has been spoiled because the orator groped about for a place to stop, and failed to find it before he had disappointed and discomfited his hearers.

It is observed by all travellers, who have visited the Alps or other stupendous mountains, that they form a very inadequate notion of the vastness of the greater ones till they ascend some of the less elevated (which are yet huge mountains), and thence view the others still towering above them. And the mind, no less than the eye, cannot so well take in and do justice to any vast object at a single glance as by several successive approaches and repeated comparisons. Thus, in the well-known climax of Cicero, in the oration against Verres, shocked as the Romans were likely to be at the bare mention of the crucifixion of one of their citizens, the successive steps by which he brings them to the contemplation of such an event were calculated to work up their feelings to a much higher pitch: "It is an outrage to bind a Roman citizen; to scourge him is an atrocious crime; to put him to death is almost parricide; but to crucify him—what shall I call it?"

So in the ideal address, as the speaker rises, the audience look upon him with indifferent curiosity; they are attracted by his introduction, they are interested in his narration, impressed by his argument, and, finally, roused to enthusiasm by his conclusion. A famous preacher said wisely that if he failed to make the last part of his address more forcible than the first, he would go back and enfeeble the first rather than have the audience dampened by an anti-climax.

It may be worth while here to remark that it is a common fault of an *extempore* speaker to be tempted, by finding himself

listened to with attention and approbation, to go on adding another and another sentence (what is called in the homely language of the jest "more last words") after he had intended, and announced his intention, to bring his discourse to a close; till at length, the audience becoming manifestly weary and impatient, he is forced to conclude in a feeble and spiritless manner, like a half-extinguished candle going out in smoke. Let the speaker decide beforehand what shall be his concluding topic, and let him premeditate thoroughly not only the substance of it, but the mode of treating it, and all but the very words; and let him resolve that whatever liberty he may reserve to himself of expanding and contracting other parts of his speech, according as he finds the hearers more or less interested (which is for an extemporary speaker natural and proper) he will strictly adhere to his original design in respect of what he has fixed on for his conclusion; and that whenever he shall see fit to arrive at that, nothing shall tempt him either to expand it beyond what he had determined on, or to add anything else beyond it.—WHATELY.

**The Will** of the audience is to be influenced in the conclusion. The introduction appeals to their taste, and pleases; the argument appeals to their understanding, and convinces; the conclusion appeals to their passions, and persuades to action.

It is worth remarking, as a curious fact, that men are liable to deceive themselves as to the degree of deference they feel toward various persons. But the case is the same with many other feelings also, such as pity, contempt, love, joy, etc.; in respect to which we are apt to mistake the *conviction* that such and such an object *deserves* pity, contempt, etc., for the feeling itself—which often does not accompany that conviction.—WHATELY.

We often appreciate the good, the true, the noble, when they inspire no impulse to contact.

To say that it is possible to persuade without speaking to the passions is but at best a kind of specious nonsense. The coolest reasoner always in persuading addresseth himself to the passions

some way or other. This he cannot avoid doing if he speaks to the purpose. To make me believe, it is enough to show me that things are so; to make me act, it is necessary to show that the action will answer some end. That can never be an end to me which gratifies no passion or affection in my nature. You assure me "It is for my honor." Now you solicit my pride, without which I had never been able to understand the word. You say, "It is for my interest." Now you bespeak my self-love. "It is for the public good." Now you rouse my patriotism. "It will relieve the miserable." Now you touch my pity. So far, therefore, is it from being an unfair method of persuasion to move the passions that there is no persuasion without moving them.

But if so much depend on passion, where is the scope for argument? Before I answer this question, let it be observed that in order to persuade there are two things which must be carefully studied by the orator. The first is to excite some desire or passion in the hearers; the second is to satisfy their judgment that there is a connection between the action to which he would persuade them and the gratification of the desire or passion which he excites. This is the analysis of persuasion. The former is effected by communicating lively and glowing ideas of the object; the latter, unless so evident of itself as to supersede the necessity, by presenting the best and most forcible arguments which the nature of the subject admits. In the one lies the pathetic; in the other the argumentative. These incorporated together constitute that vehemence of contention to which the greatest exploits of eloquence ought doubtless to be ascribed.—CAMPBELL.

Instead of exclaiming as Demosthenes ceased, "What an orator!" his hearers would call out, "Up! let us march against Philip."

*The one way* to rouse the passion of the audience is to be thoroughly aroused one's self. "If you wish me to weep," says Horace, "you must first yourself be deeply grieved." But Vinet admirably remarks that Horace does not say the orator must shed tears in order to inspire them. His power is in the emotion he feels, not in the

expression of it; and he will affect his audience most by seeming to struggle to repress its manifestation. Shakspeare's art is nowhere more perfect than where he illustrates this in the speech of Antony over the corpse of Cæsar.

It was remarked above that if the pathetic exceeds a certain measure, from being very pleasant it becomes very painful. Then the mind recurs to every expedient, and to disbelief among others, by which it may be enabled to disburden itself of what distresseth it. And indeed whenever this recourse is had by any, it is a sure indication that with regard to such the poet, orator, or historian hath exceeded the proper measure.—CAMPBELL.

The proper course for the orator to take is to excite the emotions of the hearers by means of images, and not to attempt to execute any images in the mind of the hearer by means of his emotions. For while some of the passions and sentiments appear to have the power to execute images in the mind independently of volition and the judgment, yet it should be considered that as the orator is necessitated to address the mind of the hearer in accordance with its common and normal operations, he cannot count upon this reflex art, which the hearer may indeed practise upon his own imagination, but which the orator cannot reasonably expect to practise upon it except incidentally and casually, and therefore with no uniform results.—HERVEY.

Sermons would probably have more effect if instead of being, as they frequently are, directly hortatory, they were more in a didactic form; occupied chiefly in explaining some transaction related, or doctrine laid down in scripture. The generality of hearers are too much familiarized to direct exhortation to feel it adequately; if they are led to the same point obliquely as it were, and induced to dwell with interest for a considerable time on some point closely though incidentally connected with the most awful and important truths, a very slight application to themselves might make a greater impression than the most vehement appeal at the outset. Often, indeed, they would themselves make this application unconsciously, and if on any this procedure made no impression, it can hardly be expected that anything else would. To use a homely illustration, a moderate charge of powder will have more effect in splitting a rock, if we begin by deep boring, and introducing the charge into the very heart of it, than ten times the quantity exploded on the surface.



## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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Prominence of the partition, p. 519.

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1. *The introduction*, p. 522.

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2. *The narration*, p. 525.

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5. *The conclusion*, p. 531.

Influencing the will, p. 533.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING.

**Methods of Preparation** for public speaking may be grouped under four heads.

(1) *Writing out the discourse, and then Reading it.* Only by courtesy can this be called speaking at all. Its ADVANTAGES are :

(a) *It insures study.*

A man may talk at random, and never find it out ; but if he write his address he must have some connection of thought, and be led to some consideration.

(b) *It secures complete treatment.*

The man finds it most difficult to say what he wants to, who is overflowing with ideas that he has not thoroughly systematized. He that knows nothing of a subject can look up a few ideas and deliver them with much more effect than he that knows a hundred times as much of it, but is overwhelmed by the torrent of thoughts that come surging for utterance. In writing his address the latter has opportunity to measure his words by the time at his disposal, and to portion out his moments according to the relative importance of each subdivision.

Sir Boyle Roche, whose speeches have so long been a thesaurus to rhetorical writers of illustrations of rhetorical blunders, was not void of thought, even in the well-known instance of his inquiry, "What has posterity done for us?" He had a thought which was entirely logical to his purpose. It was that of the reasonableness of reciprocity of service. Probably he was driven into a

vacuity of thought by the burst of laughter which followed, and which he met by explaining, "By posterity, sir, I do not mean our ancestors, but those who are to come immediately after." One of the aims of conquest in the mastery of extemporaneous speech is that of beating back the rush and trampling of thoughts which huddle themselves into these bovine forms of style.—**PHELPS.**

Thomas Bradley of the Sydney Legislative Council found fault with the newspaper reporters on the ground that they did not give the speeches accurately. Therefore they took great pains to report his remarks verbatim. The following is the passage :

The reporters—ought not to—the reporters ought not to be the ones to judge of what is important—not to say what should be left out—but—the member can only judge of what is important. As I—as my speeches—as the reports—as what I say is reported sometimes, no one—nobody can understand from the reports—what it is—what I mean.

Even Daniel Webster was known to fail when he had insufficient time for preparation, though when he delivered the following speech at Rochester, he is said to have been under the influence of the cup that cheers and does inebriate :

Men of Rochester, I am glad to see you, and I am glad to see your noble city. Gentlemen, I saw your falls, which, I am told, are a hundred and fifty feet high. Gentlemen, Rome had her Cæsar, her Scipio, and her Brutus, but Rome in her proudest day never had a waterfall a hundred and fifty feet high! Gentlemen, Greece had her Demosthenes, her Pericles, her Socrates, but Greece in her palmyest days never had a waterfall a hundred and fifty feet high! Men of Rochester, go on! No people ever lost their liberties who had a waterfall a hundred and fifty feet high.—**SCHÉLE DE VERE.**

The **Disadvantages** are :

(a) It is rigid.

The happiest feature of a speech is special appropriateness to the time and circumstances (see page 506). To these the written address can be only guessingly adapted, and when the guess goes wrong (as when it is made to allude to the crowd of people present, and is delivered before a handful) it becomes ridiculous. Such addresses have been likened to a heavy piece of ordnance built into the solid wall of a fortress. If the enemy's vessel happens to come in range it is very effective ; but it can hit only one certain spot.

(b) It lacks spontaneity.

It is only by the fresh feelings of the heart that mankind can be very powerfully affected. What can be more ridiculous than an orator delivering stale indignation, and fervor of a week old; turning over whole pages of violent passions, written out in German text; reading the tropes and apostrophes into which he is hurried by the ardor of his mind; and so affected at a preconcerted line and page that he is unable to proceed any further.—SIDNEY SMITH.

An old Scotch lady was told that her minister used notes, but would not believe it. Said one: "Gang into the gallery and see." She did so, and saw the written sermon. After the luckless preacher had concluded his reading on the last page, he said, "But I will not enlarge." The old woman called out from her lofty position, "Ye canna, ye canna, for your paper's gien out."

Besides that the audience are more sure that the thoughts they hear expressed are the genuine emanations of the speaker's mind at the moment, their attention and interest are the more excited by their sympathy with one whom they perceive to be carried forward solely by his own unaided and unremitting efforts, without having any book to refer to; they view him as a swimmer supported by his own constant exertions; and in every such case, if the feat be well accomplished, the surmounting of the difficulty affords great gratification, especially to those who are conscious that they could not do the same. And one proof that part of the pleasure conveyed does arise from this source is that as spectators of an exhibition of supposed unusual skill in swimming would instantly withdraw most of their interest and admiration if they perceived that the performer was supported by corks, or the like, so would the feelings alter of the hearers of a supposed extemporaneous discourse, as soon as they should perceive or even suspect that the orator had it written down before him.—WHATELY.

(e) The inspiration of the audience is lost.

The mental stimulus of a great assembly in sympathy with the speaker is the noblest inspiration possible to the intellect. This and this alone makes possible the great triumphs of oratory. The speaker that reads what he has written may become a finished essayist, but he will never even conceive of the possibilities of oratory until he has been lifted out of himself and his previous thought into the surge of living thought that rushes from a thousand eager eyes he sees bent upon him.

A finished oration, in due proportions, pronounced by a master of the art, is no more an extemporaneous effort than was "Paradise Lost." Its method and preparation and the grandiose style of delivery are all studied, like Booth's *Hamlet*. Such were the orations of Demosthenes and Cicero. Such were Burke's; and such, we may add, have been all the really great orations into whose origin we can penetrate. We don't yet know

how Governor Long makes his perfect posies of after-dinner speeches, with all their flowers of rhetoric set in due contrast, but some time, we presume, we shall know. Everett followed the classic models; and from the balanced structure of his sentences down to the varying tones of his voice, and to the pathetic use of a handkerchief as fine as a cloud, he was letter perfect. Webster's preparation was a kind of prolonged brooding over a subject. He mastered it by slow cogitation, turning it in mind in all interior lights, while phrases slowly formed themselves, and points were fixed, and illustrations crystallized, and hints of grand images and apostrophes came like dhn spirits at his call. The oration was potentially done without putting pen to paper. Mr. Everett relates that the night before Webster replied to Hayne, he felt anxious for his friend's success, and called upon him to ask about his preparation. Mr. Webster exhibited his notes; they were upon a piece of paper the size of his palm. The effect is a matter of history. The speech was well reported for the *National Intelligencer*, but whoever will look at that report and compare it with the oration as it stands in Mr. Webster's works, will see with what care, and with what masterly literary art, the great orator elaborated and polished his grand sentences. Webster's speeches *grew*; they were not made. Wendell Phillips cannot be wholly indifferent to literary art; but he values it as a means, and not as an end. One can see that he considers the nice refinements of style as filigree work, and a professed phrasemonger as a very unimportant person. With him language is a means of establishing truth and carrying conviction. We cannot speak by authority, but we presume that, though he makes some preparation, the trenchant phrases and the brilliant illustrations come in their matured form at the moment they are uttered. It is a curious coincidence that the great friend of the Irish race is so characteristically Irish in temper and genius. The Irish naturally admire him, partly because of his old friendship for O'Connell, but more, we think, because his fervid eloquence touches the ready sources of sympathy, and produces the rapid and resistless emotions in which this imaginative race delights. When he is aroused, metaphors and tropes are the spontaneous products of his mind, and the torrent of his impassioned words reminds us of the wonderful eloquence that distinguished the last of the Irish parliaments.—*Boston Saturday Gazette*.

(2) *Writing out the Discourse, and then Committing it to Memory.*

Here the speaker has more command of gesture, and can simulate spontaneity. But the labor of committal is extreme and unnecessary, the attention is distracted by the effort of recalling and by nervousness lest the memory should fail, and finally there is an unreality and affectation about it—a seeming instead of a reality—that is fatal to the best effort.

(3) *Appearing without any Written Preparation.*

Here there is great temptation to slight preparation, and great danger of losing control of the subject. Only accomplished speakers should venture to take this risk, nor should they make the venture except before a familiar audience and on a familiar theme.

(4) *Analyzing the Subject under Written Heads.*

Full but clear and brief notes are undoubtedly the best preparation for public speaking. Here the treatment is determined, the time is properly apportioned, the thread of the discourse may at any time be recovered, and the confidence the orator feels that he will not be caught at a loss leaves him at liberty to cast himself unreservedly into the most vivid expression he can command.

**Written Analysis :**

In order to produce or arrange it well, you must take your pen in hand. Writing is a whetstone, or flattening engine, which wonderfully stretches ideas, and brings out all their malleableness and ductility.

On some unforeseen occasion you may, without doubt, after a few moments of reflection, array suddenly the plan of your discourse, and speak appropriately and eloquently. This presupposes, in other respects, that you are well versed in your subject, and that you have in your understanding chains of thought formed by previous meditations ; for it is impossible to extemporize the thoughts, at least during the whole of a discourse.

But if you have time for preparation, never undertake to speak without having put on paper the frame of what you have to say, the links of your ideas ; and this for two reasons :—the first and weightiest is, that you thus possess your subject better, and accordingly you speak more closely and with less risk of digressions. The second is, that when you write down a thought you analyze it. The division of the subject becomes clear, becomes determinate, and a crowd of things which were not before perceived present themselves under the pen.

Speaking is thinking aloud, but it is more ; it is thinking with method and more distinctly, so that in uttering your idea you not only make others understand it, but you understand it better yourself while spreading it out before your own eyes and unfolding it by words.

Writing adds more still to speech, giving it more precision, more fixity, more strictness ; and by being forced more closely to examine what you wish to write down you extract hidden relations.

you reach greater depths, wherein may be disclosed rich veins or abundant lodes.

We are able to declare that one is never fully conscious of all that is in one's own thought, except after having written it out. So long as it remains shut up in the inside of the mind, it preserves a certain haziness ; one does not see it completely unfolded, and one cannot consider it on all sides, in each of its facets, in each of its bearings.

Again, while it merely flies through the air in words, it retains something vague, mobile, and indefinite. Its outlines are loosely drawn, its shape is uncertain, the expression of it is more or less precarious, and there is always something to be added or withdrawn. It is never more than a sketch. Style only gives to thought its just expression, its finished form, and perfect manifestation.—BAUTAIN.

Bonaparte used to say that he never felt acquitted, after an action had terminated, if he was sensible of having omitted any resource of defence which was clearly within his reach.

PREPARATION FOR SPEAKING.—Having often heard that the longer a member sits in the House of Commons without speaking, the harder it is for him to make a beginning, I determined to lose no time in delivering my maiden speech. It had not until last election been my intention to enter Parliament, so that I had never "got up" any political subjects. It was therefore necessary, before any speech could even be planned, that I should take a subject, and study so as to form definite opinions upon it. The following plan I adopted. Having chosen —— for my topic, I read all the debates and pamphlets which could throw any light upon it, and wrote very numerous notes while reading. When this part of the labor was accomplished, I reviewed the notes, and arranged them under heads in an order which had suggested itself to my mind. I then cast out all that appeared to be irrelevant, and whatever did not make straight for the point at which I wished to aim.

To make a short schedule of the various heads, together with memoranda of some embellishments and illustrations, was my next care. And when this schedule was clearly imprinted on my mind, I frequently spoke the speech over to myself whilst out walking, in order to accustom myself to various modes of expression. Then

I wrote out the whole speech, bestowing particular care upon the exordium and on the peroration. And lastly I learned these two parts by heart, but never looked again at the rest of the speech. The same plan, leaving much more to the chances of the critical moment, I have found to answer on less important occasions.—  
LORD —, quoted by HALCOMBE.

#### HE CANNOT MAKE A SPEECH.

A Texas correspondent is in great trouble of mind because he finds himself unable to make speeches which satisfy his own critical taste in oratory. There are so many men who have experienced difficulties like those he describes, and who have suffered from the same sort of mortification at their failure to make a creditable exhibition of themselves when they undertook to address an audience, that it is worth while to carefully consider the questions which he propounds in the following letter :

Sometimes, and that very frequently of late, I am called on to make a speech. Let there be a Sabbath-school celebration, a prayer-meeting, or public assembly convened in the neighborhood, or any other similar gathering, where speaking is in order, and just as surely as I am on hand I am called on for a speech. Please do not construe this as a boast. It is not that at all ; but I wish to state my case as plainly as possible. Well, it makes no difference whether I am prepared or unprepared on those occasions, I find that I have one great difficulty with which to contend, and that is this : It seems at times to be impossible for me to collect and concentrate my ideas. This always throws me into a state of confusion, and it sometimes seems, to use a vulgar phrase, as if I could not see an inch before my nose.

This mortifies me no little, and several times, after an effort, I have carefully reviewed, as best I could, what I had said, and it would seem as if a ten-year-old boy could have beaten me two to one. Sometimes I am inclined to lay this to a deficient education, for I never went to school but very little in life ; but then I frequently hear men make real logical speeches who I know have no better education than myself—hence my theory fails. My first oratorical effort was at a school exhibition eight years ago, and I look upon it as my best. From that time until now I have had to do more or less speaking ; but for the last year or two the evil of which I speak is growing on me. I find of late that for eight or ten minutes I can do tolerably well, but if I undertake anything like a practical or logical speech, my ideas become all confused, and I have to quit.

I am now thirty-five years of age, and in full possession of all my faculties. If you can advise me how to remedy the above evil I will be placed under many obligations to you for your kind advice ; not that I ever expect to try to make a living by public speaking, but I would like very much to be qualified to speak in a calm, dignified manner whenever called on to do so.

READER.

The trouble with our Texas friend is probably that he tries to make too great a speech. His first attempt at oratory was so suc-



cessful that he dreamed of becoming a Demosthenes or a Cicero, and, instead of keeping up the simple, off-hand manner he unconsciously adopted on that occasion, he has been thinking about himself and whether he was making a creditable appearance in his subsequent speeches. He has been too anxious about the effect he was producing to keep his ideas together. He could not think about himself, about what his audience were thinking of him, and about his subject, all at the same time. Of course his ideas became confused under such circumstances. Even in an ordinary conversation between two people, where the speaker is assisted by the remarks, questions, and replies of his interlocutor, nobody can keep up the interest if he makes his self-consciousness manifest, and betrays too much anxiety to create a good impression. To be a really entertaining talker, in public or private, it is necessary that the speaker should forget himself, and discourse spontaneously after he has once secured the sympathy of his hearers.

Usually when men get on their feet to talk to a crowd, they assume an unnatural manner, and try to put things after a fashion foreign to them, but which they regard as the appropriate one for an orator. They are in a frame of mind which disposes them to embarrassment, and that destroys their ability to speak well. They can no more discourse with force and grace than a bashful boy who is conscious of his dress can make himself entertaining in company.

But our Texas friend need not conclude that he is necessarily a fool because he cannot make a brilliant off-hand speech, or one which would bear reporting. The men who can do that are very few. At no period are there many first-rate extemporaneous orators, and unless he has a natural gift that way, it is hardly worth his while to undertake to become one. He can, however, by practice, learn to command his thoughts while he is on his feet, and succeed in overcoming his embarrassment in the presence of an audience. Then, if he has anything to say in public, he can say it simply and clearly, and, if he is really in earnest, with a force and directness which will make his hearers forget the mere manner of his oratory.

Our advice to him, therefore, is never to set out to make a speech unless he has some important points to make ; something

to say which will be worth listening to, no matter how he may say it. And, above all things, let him never try to interest other people in things in which he has no real interest himself. Nor should he expect his thoughts to come to him without preparation. He must discourse of matters of which he knows, and about which he has reflected, if he expects to engage the attention of intelligent men. It is a good rule, in public and in private, never to undertake the office of teacher, adviser, admonisher, jester, or satirist, unless you have some good reason to suppose you are fitted for the business.—*New York Sun*.

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## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

### **Extemporaneous Speaking.**

#### **Methods of preparation, p. 537.**

1. *Writing out the discourse and then reading it, p. 537.*

#### Advantages :

- a. It insures study, p. 537.
- b. It secures complete treatment, p. 537.

#### Disadvantages :

- a. It is rigid, p. 538.
- b. It lacks spontaneity, p. 538.
- c. The inspiration of the audience is lost, p. 539.

2. *Writing out the discourse and then committing it to memory, p. 540.*

3. *Appearing without any written preparation, p. 540.*

4. *Analyzing the subject under written heads, p. 541.*

#### **Written analysis, p. 541.**

HE CANNOT MAKE A SPEECH, p. 543.





## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE VOICE.

Demosthenes had three particular defects: (1) weakness of the voice, which he strengthened by declaiming on the sea-shore, amid the roar of waters; (2) shortness of breath, which he remedied by repeating his orations as he walked up hill; and (3) a thick, mumbling way of speaking, which he overcame by reading and reciting with pebbles in his mouth.

**The Voice** is an element of oratorical power that no speaker can afford to neglect. Articulation and Pronunciation have already been discussed as elements of Conversation (see page 151). Oratory requires, further, that the voice be strong, and its ends are greatly promoted if the voice is pleasing.

**Strength of Voice** is necessary, that all which is said may be heard, and that the effort of listening may not occupy the attention of the listener, and thus distract it from the thought conveyed. Porter names these inconveniences of a feeble voice:

Laborious listening excites impatience in a hearer that often amounts to vexation. It gives pain:

(a) By sympathy, as the listener shares the fatigue of the speaker.

(b) By mental labor, in which the invention and industry of the hearer are kept on the stretch to make out by construction the sense of that which was uttered so imperfectly as to reach his ear only in disjointed parts.

Of Garrick it is said that the habit of speaking gave to his utterance an energy so wonderful that sentences and parts of sentences even on his under key were distinctly aud-

ble to ten thousand people. It is stated that when Whitefield preached in the open air at Philadelphia, he was heard with tolerable distinctness by persons across the Delaware, three-fourths of a mile away.

#### ACQUIREMENT OF A GOOD VOICE.

**The Physiology** of the voice reveals remarkable complexity of construction.

In the larynx itself are eight muscles more immediately controlling the tension of the vocal membranes. The tongue and palate contain about twenty more; the lips and cavity of the mouth comprise ten others. All these, to the number of thirty-eight or forty, are employed directly in the articulate utterance of a sentence. When we add to these the muscles of the thorax, employed indirectly in regulating the stream of air, and advert, lastly, to the various other accessory muscles of the extremities or elsewhere, without some action of which it is difficult if not impossible to speak with any fluency, we have reached a point of complication hardly paralleled by any other of our daily functions. —HALCOMBE.

The lungs are the soliciting agent, the larynx is the vibrative agent, the mouth is the reflective agent. These must act in unison or there is no result. The larynx might be called the mouth of the instrument, the inside of the mouth the pavilion, the lungs the artist. In a violin the larynx would be the string, the lungs the bow, the mouth the instrument itself.—PLUMPTRE.

Gordon Holmes thus classifies the organs of speech :

(a) Organs which combine their action to generate sound.

i. The air-chamber commanding the motor-element. The chest-walls with their proper muscles; the lungs; the bronchial tubes; and the trachea, or windpipe.

ii. The larynx, containing the vibrating element. The laryngeal cartilages sustaining the vocal reeds, and the intrinsic and extrinsic muscles acting on them.

(b) Organs which merely modify sound.

i. The resonance apparatus, or vocal tube. The ventricles and

vestibule of the larynx, the pharynx, mouth, and nose with its accessory cavities. Also, certain movable parts of the boundaries of the vocal tube, viz., the epiglottis, soft palate, and lower jaw.

ii. The articulating instrument. The tongue, lips, soft palate, teeth, and lower jaw.

The vocal apparatus resembles the optic and auric apparatus, differing from them in one essential point: *i. e.*, sight and hearing are involuntary. No sooner are our eyes open and there is light, or our ears open and there is a noise, than we see and hear, whether we wish to do so or not. The voice, on the contrary, is under the control of the will; man speaks only when he chooses.

There is a second difference; we cannot see or hear more or less at pleasure, except by interposing some veil or obstacle between the external world and ourselves. But not so with the voice; we speak fast or slow, loud or low; we regulate the measure of vocal action as well as the action itself.

Hence, the natural inference is that we cannot be taught to hear or see (I refer to mere material action), and that consequently there is no art of seeing or hearing; while we may learn to talk, language being susceptible to changes resulting from the will.

One word will suffice to explain this difference.

The vocal apparatus is not only an *apparatus*, it is an *instrument*, like a piano. Now what is the characteristic feature of the piano? The key board is composed of from six and a half to seven octaves, divided into three classes of notes—upper, lower, and middle—whose tones correspond to strings of various sizes. The voice has its key-board also, divided into two octaves instead of seven, but having its three species of notes like the piano, and its chords of differing size; and we can never play upon the voice properly without study, any more than we can on the piano.

Let me go even farther. On leaving the hands of a good maker, the piano is a complete and perfect instrument, the sound issuing from it as musical as it is harmonious, when called forth by an artist's fingers. But the little piano given us at birth seldom reaches such perfection. There are missing chords, squeaky keys, false notes; so that before we can become good pianists we must turn makers and tuners, and set our instruments in order.—LEGOUVÉ.

**Reading Aloud** is perhaps the most indispensable exercise for strengthening the voice. In general this should be done standing, and with as much voice as propriety will admit.

Read aloud resounding Homer's strain,  
And wield the thunder of Demosthenes.  
The chest, so exercised, improves in strength,  
And quick vibrations through the bowels drive  
The restless blood.—ARMSTRONG.

## PROPER USE OF THE VOICE.

**Breathing** is an art that immediately underlies good speaking. This has been admirably shown by M. Legouvé, as follows :

Many may think that if there be a natural and instinctive action upon earth with which art has nothing to do it is the act of taking breath. To breathe is to live, and we breathe unconsciously as we live ; and yet no one can read well without breathing properly, and no one can breathe properly without study ; indeed, it is one of the rarest accomplishments in a reader. Let me explain myself. When we breathe in every-day life, the air enters and leaves the lungs like a stream flowing continuously, insensibly, and equably. But this gentle passage of the air through the throat does not suffice to set the vocal chords in vibration, and they are mute like the keys of an untouched piano ; the air must strike them a sharp blow before they will resound, as the fingers strike the keys of the piano. Some of my readers may have heard an Æolian harp : it stood in a doorway or window ; if there was no air it was silent, but let the air be condensed into wind, and the strings wake to music. A similar phenomenon occurs every time that we speak. We condense and compress the air contained in the lungs, force it into the throat, and this shock produces speech. But this requires more air than the ordinary act of breathing, and we can no longer use the simile of a flowing stream : we must compare the breath to water gushing from a pump, spurting out faster and faster at every stroke of the handle. The usual conditions of breathing are now set aside. The scant supply of air stored away for ordinary breath-taking is insufficient for the energetic act of speech ; a balance must be struck between what we *have* and what we *should have*. We must go to headquarters, to the atmosphere itself, and demand the necessary amount of air. This demand is called inhalation ; the act of breathing being divided into two parts—inhalation and expiration. To inhale is to gain a supply for future need ; to exhale, to expend that provision.

Each of these is an act in itself. The art of inhalation consists in drawing breath from the very base of the lungs, from the dia-

phragm; for if we breathe from the upper part of the lungs only, we obtain too small a supply of air, which is soon exhausted, and if we have a lengthy passage to read we are in the condition of a traveller in the desert who starts with his water-skins but half full—breath fails us; we are obliged to pause and take in a fresh stock, which is fatiguing both to ourselves and to others, as we shall presently see. The first duty of the reader who is to fill a long programme is to take a deep breath at the start, to be sure that his lungs are well furnished. Then comes the second and most difficult part—expenditure of this breath. A bad reader does not take breath often enough, and spends it too freely; he throws this precious treasure out of the window, as it were, squandering it as a spendthrift his gold. The result is that the speaker, reader, actor, or singer, as the case may be, is continually at the pump, giving sudden gasps, which are most disagreeable to his audience.

An accomplished singer of my acquaintance had this failing; he was constantly taking breath, and the bellows-like sound mingled with his singing was unendurable. He finally perceived and corrected his mistake, proving that it may be cured. M. Stockhausen, an eminent artist, astonished all the Swiss guides by never losing breath in climbing the steepest mountains. "My secret is a simple one," said he; "I understand the art of breathing." The great singer, Rubini, was a thorough master of the art. No one ever heard him breathe. The following anecdote of Talma may serve to explain this seeming mystery:

While a young man, Talma played Diderot's "Père de Famille," and on reaching the famous speech, "Fifteen hundred pounds a year and my Sophy," he burst out, stormed, raged, and finally hurrying behind the scenes in a state of complete exhaustion, sank against the wall, panting like an ox.

"Fool!" said Molé, who was standing by, "and you pretend to play tragedy! Come to me to-morrow, and I'll teach you how to be impassioned without getting out of breath."

Talma went; but, whether the master lacked patience or the pupil docility, the lesson did him little good. At that time there was an actor at the theatre named Dorival; thin, ugly, and weak-voiced, he was nevertheless quite successful as a tragedian. "How does that fellow manage?" thought Talma. "I am ten times as strong, and yet I fatigue myself ten times more. I must ask him his secret." Dorival baffled his querist by this bitter-sweet reply, which has a smack of envy in it: "O! you are so successful, M. Talma, that you need no lessons."

"I'll make you give me one, though," muttered Talma; and the next time that Dorival played *Andriani* in "Zaire," the young man hid himself—guess where! in the prompter's box, where he could hear and see without being seen. There he watched and studied to such good purpose that, after the great speech in the second act, he left his post, exclaiming, "I've got it! I've got it!" He saw that Dorival's whole art lay in his genius for breathing, which led him always to take breath before his lungs were quite empty, and, to conceal this repeated inhalation from the public, he strove to place



it before *a*, *e*, or *o*—that is, at places where, his mouth being already open, he could breathe lightly and imperceptibly.

We see what an immense part the breath has to play in elocutionary art ; its rules are the only inviolable ones. An actor launched on a stormy passage, carried away by passion, may forget the laws of punctuation, confound commas and periods and hasten headlong to the conclusion of his phrase ; but he must always be master of his breath, even when he seems to lose it ; an accomplished actor is never out of breath except in appearance and for effect.

Talma reduced these rules to a striking maxim : “ The artist who tires himself is no genius.”

I hear my reader's objection : “ This art may be very useful to an actor ; but we are talking of reading, not the theatre.” Yea, but the reader needs it yet more than the actor ; for, long and important as the latter's part may be, he always has times of forced rest. He is silent when others speak, and his very gestures, added to his words, help to make them true and touching. But the reader often goes on for an hour without pause, the immobility of his body obliging him to draw all his power from his will alone. Consider, therefore, whether it is useless for him to understand the management of that precious breath which alone can carry him triumphantly and untired to the end.

Here is a curious example of the science of economy applied to the breath. Take a lighted candle, stand in front of it, and sing *a* ; the light will scarcely flicker : but, instead of a single tone, sing a scale, and you will see the candle quiver at every note. The singer, Delle Sedie, runs up and down the scale before a flame, and it never wavers. This is because he permits only the exact amount of breath to escape which is requisite to force the sound straight forward ; and the air, being thus occupied in the emission of the note, loses its quality of wind, and is reduced to its quality of sound. You or I, on the contrary, waste a great deal of breath, and send the sound right and left, as well as forward. From this elocutionary rule we may deduce a moral lesson : In every act of life spend no more than the exact amount of energy required ! Every mental emotion is a jewel. Let us hoard them up for fitting use. How many people waste, in impatience and petty strife, the treasure of anger, so sacred when it becomes righteous wrath !

Now for a few final and most necessary suggestions to readers. To breathe easily, choose a high seat. Buried in an easy-chair, it is impossible to breathe from the base of the lungs. I would also say, be careful to sit erect. No one who stoops can breathe otherwise than ill.

To this admirable exposition of the subject may be added the following practical suggestions :

A full inspiration elevates and expands the chest, and, by descent of the diaphragm, slightly protrudes the abdomen ; and a correct vocal expiration manifests itself, first, in the flattening of the abdomen, and then in its very gradually falling inward, in prolonged expiration—the chest making little or no action downward, even in the most forcible effort.

In cases of pulmonary and vocal weakness, the very opposite of this mode of respiration is generally found to be habitual. The chest falls with every expiration, and has to be again raised when breath is inhaled. The diaphragm is almost a fixture, and the speaker becomes exhausted by the continual muscular effort needed to work the massive frame-work of the chest. The chest should be fully expanded, once for all, before the first word is uttered, and then kept up by frequent imperceptible replenishment of air to the close of the longest sentence or paragraph. In this way speaking becomes, instead of an exhausting labor, one of the most salutary exercises.—BELL.

It is to be noted that the percussiveness of good oratorical speech is not due to chest-action—which would be laborious—but to expansibility of the pharynx, the cavity at the back of the mouth and above the throat. Distention of the pharynx may be plainly seen in the neck of a player on the bugle or *cornet-a-piston*.—LÉGOUVÉ.

Inspiration is allowable :

- i. After all words preceded or followed by an ellipse.
- ii. After words used in apostrophe, as, Sir, Madam.
- iii. After conjunctions and interjections, when there is silence.
- iv. After all transpositions ; for example, to live, one must work. Here the preposition *to* takes the value of its natural antecedent, *work* ; that is to say, six degrees, since by inversion it precedes it, and the gesture of the sentence bears wholly on the preposition.
- v. Before and after incidental phrases.
- vi. When we wish to indicate an emotion. . . .

The suspensory act expresses reticence and disquietude. A child who has just been corrected deservedly, and who recognizes his fault, expires. Another, corrected unjustly, and who feels grief more than love, inspires.—DELSARTE.

**Closed Teeth** will prevent distinct utterance.

A considerable loss of resonance is the consequence, because the cavity of the mouth is never placed in the best position for reinforcing the laryngeal tones, and also because the sound-waves cannot issue with sufficient freedom to the external air. It is only

necessary to recognize the habit, when existent, in order that the inclination to it may be overcome by the will.—HOLMES.

**The Pitch** of voice is a matter of great consequence. To quote again from Legouvé :

The auditorium of the Conservatory, said Febvé, resembles an excellent Stradivarius. No violin surpasses it in harmonious resonance. The sounds that you send forth are returned to you by its melodious walls fuller, rounder, softer. Your voice can play on these walls as your fingers play on the keys of a fine musical instrument. Be very careful, therefore, to avoid too high a pitch. And lay down this rule as a principle : Always adapt and proportion your voice not only to the size of the hall in which you speak, but also to its acoustic properties.

The three varieties of voice known as high, low, and medium, are all indispensable to artistic reading ; but they should be very differently used, their strength being quite unequal. The medium voice is the strongest, most flexible, and natural of the three ; indeed, the famous actor Molé once said, "Without the middle register no reputation." In fact, the medium voice, being the ordinary one, is used to express all the truest and most natural emotions : the lower notes often have great power, the upper notes great brilliancy ; but they should never be used unseasonably. I might compare the upper notes to the cavalry in an army, to be reserved for sudden, bold attacks, triumphant charges ; the lower notes, like the artillery, are used for feats of strength ; but the true dependence of the army, the element on which the tactician chiefly relies, is the infantry—the medium tones. The first rule in the art of reading establishes the superior value of the middle register. The upper tones are much more fragile, are liable to wear out, or become shrill and discordant if too much used. Sometimes this abuse of the upper notes affects the very judgment of a speaker. M. Berryer once told me how he lost an excellent case by unconsciously beginning his plea on too high a key. Fatigue soon spread from his larynx to his head, his thoughts became involved, and he lost a part of his brain-power, simply because it never occurred to him to descend from the lofty perch to which his voice had climbed at the outset.

Nor is abuse of the lower notes less serious; it produces monotony and a certain dullness and deadness of quality. Talma, when young, was much given to this failing. His voice, though powerful and eloquent, was rather sombre; and it was only by dint of hard study that he raised it from the depths where it naturally lingered. *Appropos* of this, let me relate an anecdote of my father, who, as I said before, was a fine reader—much of his success at the College of France, where he taught, depending on this talent. He often introduced quotations from the great poets of France in his lectures, which won universal applause. This applause, to which he was naturally susceptible, gained him many envious foes, and at last a criticism appeared, as follows: "Yesterday, M. Legouvé read two scenes from Racine in his sepulchral voice." This fell under the notice of one of his friends, M. Parseval Grandmaison, who immediately said: "Dear me, Legouvé must be very much vexed at this; I'll go and see him." He found my father on the sofa in a most melancholy mood.

"Oh! it's you, is it, my dear Parseval?"

"Yes. Are you ill, Legouvé? You look sad."

"No! there's nothing the matter; a slight sore throat. Tell me, Parseval, what do you think of my voice?"

"Why, I think it's beautiful, my boy."

"Yes, yes; but what do you consider its character? Do you call it a brilliant voice?"

"Oh, no! not brilliant! I would rather call it sonorous; yes, that's it, sonorous."

"Perhaps it would be better to call it a grave voice?"

"Grave be it! but not melancholy! No! no! not melancholy! And yet there is a certain——"

"But you don't call it cavernous?"

"Not at all! Still——"

"Oh! I see," cried my father, "that you agree with that wretched critic, who calls my voice sepulchral!"

The moral of this story is, that from that day forth my father strove to give his lower notes a rest, and to blend them better with the upper and medium tones; and thus he acquired that variety of sound which is at once charming to the listener, and easy for the reader.

But this intermixture of tone is not the only vocal exercise. The voice must be cultivated in various ways. Cultivation strengthens a weak voice, makes a stiff one flexible, a harsh one soft, and in fact acts upon the speaking voice as musical exercises on the singing voice. We sometimes hear that great artists—M. Duprez, for instance—*made their own voices*. The expression is incorrect. No one can make a voice who has not one to start with, and this is proved by the fact that the voice is perishable. No voice would ever be lost, could it be made at will; but it may be changed; it may gain body, brilliancy, and expression, not only from a series of gymnastics adapted to strengthen the whole organ, but from a certain method of attacking the note. Additional notes may also be gained by study. On one occasion, the famous Malibran, when

singing the rondo from "Somnambula," finished her cadenza with a trill on D in alt, running up from low D, thus embracing three octaves. These three octaves were no natural gift, but the result of long and patient labor. After the concert, some one expressed his admiration of her D in alt, to which she replied: "Well, I've worked hard enough for it. I've been chasing it for a month. I pursued it everywhere—when I was dressing, when I was doing my hair; and at last I found it in the toe of a shoe that I was putting on!" Thus we see that art will not only aid us in governing, but also in extending, our kingdom.

It hardly need be added that the pitch must be wholly under control of the speaker. The woes of Mr. Orator Puff have been thus set forth:

Mr. Orator Puff had two tones in his voice,  
The one—squeaking thus, and the other down so;  
In each sentence he utter'd he gave you your choice,  
For one-half was B alt, and the rest G below.  
Oh! oh! Orator Puff,  
One voice for an orator's surely enough.

But he still talked away, spite of coughs and of frowns,  
So distracting all ears with his ups and his downs,  
That a wag once, on hearing the orator say,  
"My voice is for war," ask'd him, "Which of them, pray?"

Reeling homeward, one evening, top-heavy with gin,  
And rehearsing his speech on the weight of the crown,  
He tripp'd near a saw-pit, and tumbled right in,  
"Sinking fund," the last words as his noddle came down.

"A'as!" he exclaimed, in his he and she tones,  
"Help me out!—help me out!—I have broken my bones!"  
"Help you out!" said a Paddy, who pass'd, "what a bother!  
Why, there's *two* of you there; can't you help one another?"

#### PRESERVATION OF THE VOICE.

**The Hygiene** of the voice is a matter of vital moment to every speaker.

The story is told of a famous singer that the stage he was riding in tumbled down a precipice. When it had stopped rolling over and over, and our tenor could recover his wits, he rose to a sitting posture, and instantly began to practise the scales. "Thank

heaven!" he exclaimed, "my high C is here yet!" And then he proceeded to find out whether any limbs were broken—a matter of minor consequence.

Porter gives these rules for the preservation of the voice:

- (a) Sustain the general health.
- (b) Spare the vocal organs: (i) keep on the normal key; (ii) rest the organs when inflamed.
- (c) Be rested before speaking; speak after you have recovered from the labor of preparation.
- (d) Do not speak when hungry, or just after a hearty meal.
- (e) Especially avoid opening the mouth when going home in the cold air.

Shuldham, an excellent authority, speaks as follows:

**REST AFTER EXERTION.**—Now, in this chapter on Hygiene of the Voice, we must give one piece of advice which is more valuable than all the drugs whose names and whose properties we may mention. The advice is as follows: *Whenever the voice is tired, give it rest*; when the body is tired, do not use the voice. Now, when the voice is tired, it has done too much work; the nerves say, "Give us peace;" the muscles echo, "Give us peace." It is but cruelty to goad these on to further efforts, and if we do, then we shall suffer, as sure as Tuesday follows Monday. Nature will have her revenge; she will not let the laws of health be violated with impunity. I said, whenever the voice is tired we should give it rest; better still before it is tired, if this is possible, and it is possible when we are simply exercising it in our quiet rooms at home; we shall then save ourselves a fatigue that in the pulpit or on the stage would be as mortifying as it is harmful to voice and reputation. Rest is a haven for which we must steer; rest is the first medicine we must think of; rest is the true medicine that nature will offer us, and rest is the only medicine that we can take in large quantities and without injury. . . .

**THE PROPER PITCH.**—Let, therefore, the clergyman who would avoid the calamity of chronic sore throat go to the piano and sing the diatonic scale until he has found the compass of his voice, and

then let him find the dominant note ; sing the note and two or three notes above and below it, so as to get thoroughly familiar with the whereabouts of the note ; then let him pitch upon it without the help of the piano. Let him afterward find the dominant note with his speaking voice, play a few chords while he executes a kind of recitative that has only a short range, and then let him break fairly into a continuous musical sound on the dominant note. Daily practice of this kind will soon render his voice flexible, and make his ear delicate to the perception of pure sound. It will not merely give flexibility, but also strength to the voice. Indeed, the true and only way to become a musical speaker is to learn the art of song. . . .

When, therefore, faulty breathing has been corrected, injudicious pitch altered, monotony of voice avoided, then the strain of voice spoken of as a cause of sore throat must disappear also, for undue strain can only in exceptional instances be occasioned when the speaker is master of his craft. . . .

PROTECTION OF THE THROAT.—It is better to keep the neck free and open from all restraint and all coddling when in health ; but cold once caught, then the catcher of cold cannot be too careful to protect himself against further hurtful influences.

Care must be taken to protect the throat against the evil influences of cold air immediately after the prolonged use of the voice, . . . for the throat is then in a state of temporary congestion, and therefore in a most impressionable condition. A current of cold air blowing on the speaker's or singer's throat is very apt to cause a chill. A chill is the beginning of all evil to the organs of breath and speech, and therefore it must be strictly avoided. By wrapping a silk handkerchief around the neck, putting on a comfortable great-coat, and breathing through the nose on the exit from the warm room or church to the cold outer air, the speaker or singer will be enabled to set cold air at defiance ; and if the exit is made at night, and there is a walk home, let the speaker's or singer's friends take the part of performers in the inevitable dialogue of a walk home, but let him take the part himself of a well-conducted audience, and keep silence. He may applaud their remarks, if valuable, with an occasional grunt of approbation from the warm recesses of comforter or beard.

**Breathing through the Nose**, especially upon leaving a heated room to enter the cold air, is perhaps more important than any other single rule for the protection of the throat and lungs.

Such facts indicate clearly that nasal inspiration exerts an important protective power, local and general, over the health. Hence we can understand the fervor with which Professor Tyndall exclaims that if he could leave a perpetual legacy to mankind, he would embody it in the words, "Keep your mouth shut."

Every precaution should be taken in order to reduce to a minimum the evil of inspiring through the mouth. In speaking, the nostrils will usually furnish enough air, unless in occasional declamations where great vehemence is demanded. That the orator will find assiduous attention to breathing through the nose, whenever practicable, a most effective agent for the preservation of his voice, may be considered as proved by experience, on the testimony of numerous eminent teachers of elocution. We even find that in the last century the knowledge of this hygienic fact, then only recognized by experts, was believed to be of such value to the professional speaker, that it was often sold for a large sum under a pledge of secrecy.—GORDON HOLMES.

#### THE VOICE AS AN INTERPRETER.

I had been criticising certain poems, and M. Cousin, though agreeing with me, was surprised by my theories, and asked me how I came by such notions.

"By reading aloud," I replied. "The voice is a revealer, an initiator, whose power is as marvellous as it is unknown."

"I do not understand."

"Let me explain. Mme. Talma, a famous actress of the last century——"

"I've seen her!" cried Cousin. "What soul! What sensibility!"

"Well! Mme. Talma tells us in her memoirs that, when playing 'Andromache,' she was once so deeply moved that tears flowed, not only from the eyes of all her hearers, but from her own as well. The tragedy over, one of her admirers rushed to her box and, grasping her hand, exclaimed: 'Oh! my dear friend, it was wonderful! It was Andromache herself! I'm sure that you really felt yourself in Epirus, Hector's widow!'

"'Not a bit of it!' she replied, with a laugh.

"'And yet you were really affected, for you wept!'

"'To be sure I did.'

"'But why? why? What made you weep?'

"'My voice.'

"'What! your voice?'



"Yes, my own voice! I was touched by the expression which my voice gave to the sorrows of Andromache, not by the sorrows themselves. The nervous shiver which traversed my frame was the electric shock produced on my nerves by my own tones. For the time being I was both actress and audience. I magnetized myself."

"How strange!" cried Cousin.

"And how much light the story throws upon the power of voice! Nor was this feeling peculiar to Mine. Talma. Rachel once made a remark which I can never forget. She was speaking of having recited in the garden at Potsdam before the Czar of Russia, King of Prussia, and other crowned heads, and she said: 'That audience of kings electrified me. Never were my tones more omnipotent; *my voice bewitched my ears!*'"

"Nor is this all. One of the greatest French actors now living has often told me that he could never reach the pitch of emotion which so deeply stirs his audience if he did not learn his parts *by reciting them aloud*. His voice electrifies and guides him! And this is the explanation of the seemingly inexplicable fact that actors who are utterly stupid may appear brilliantly on the stage."

"Impossible!"

"I have known such instances! I have seen men of ordinary intellect and sensibility on the stage mould their hearers to their will, and this because their voice knew, felt, and acted for them. Condemn them to silence, and they fall back into mediocrity. It seems as if a little fairy slumbered in their throat, who woke when they spoke, and by waving her wand roused unknown powers in them. The voice is an invisible actor hidden within the actor, a mysterious reader concealed within the reader, and serving both as prompter. I give you this problem to solve, my dear philosopher, but I draw from it this conclusion, which I hope you will grant—that, inferior as I am to you in many respects, I do know La Fontaine better than you, simply because I read him aloud."

"So be it!" said my friend, smiling; "but who can say that you do not attribute intentions which they never had to La Fontaine and other great men?"

"I answer you by a quotation from Corneille. Some one once showed him certain obscure verses of his own composition, asking for an explanation. 'When I wrote them,' was his artless reply. 'I understood them perfectly; but now they are as vague to me as to you. You see that there are certain things in the works of the masters insoluble even by themselves. In the fire of creation, they instinctively use expressions which they do not realize, but which are none the less true. Genius, like beauty and childhood, is unconscious of self. When a child enchants us by his innocent smile, he does not know that it is innocent. Does this detract from its charm? One of the chief advantages of reading aloud is the fact that it reveals countless little shades of meaning in an author, ignored even by the hand that wrote them. In this way the art might be used as a powerful educational instrument. A fine elocution teacher is often an excellent teacher of literature."

Upon this we parted, M. Cousin uttering words which were very flattering, from such a source: "Thanks, my friend, you have taught me something new!"



## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### DELIVERY.

Action is eloquence and the eyes of the ignorant  
More learned than their ears.—SHAKESPEARE.

A clergyman asked Garrick, "Why is it that you are able to produce so much more effect with the recital of your fictions than we by the delivery of the most important truths?" Garrick replied, "Because you speak truths as if they were fictions; we speak fictions as if they were truths."

The friends of a young man destined to professional life as a public speaker were solicitous about his success in speaking, and suggested the importance of his devoting himself to the study and practice of elocution. "I want no artificial training," was the prompt reply; "find me the thing to say, and I'll find the manner of saying it." This young man must have consciously possessed by special endowment all that it cost Demosthenes so many laborious years to master.—RUSSELL.

Demosthenes having once harangued the people very unsuccessfully, hastened home with his head covered, and in much chagrin. Meeting with Satyrus, the tragedian, he complained bitterly to him, that though he labored more than all other orators, and had greatly impaired his health by it, yet he could not please the people; but that drunkards, mariners, and other illiterate persons were wholly in possession of the popular ear. "You say true," answered Satyrus; "but I shall soon remove the cause, if you will repeat me some verses of Euripides or Sophocles without book." Demosthenes did so, and Satyrus repeated the verses after him, but with such variety of expression and aptness of gesture that Demosthenes scarcely knew them to be the same. The lesson was not lost; Demosthenes saw what a vast accession of power was added to an oration by action and elocution, and thenceforth considered all declamation vain where these qualities were neglected.—*Percy Anecdotes.*

**NECESSITY OF STUDY.**—There is a common impression among young speakers that delivery is a natural gift; that a good discourse will find natural and effective expression; that there is something theatrical in making a study of tone, accent, emphasis, and gesture.

People, by a strange confusion of terms, use indifferently and in the same sense the two words *speak* and *talk*. No two words

are more unlike in meaning. There are people who, from the standpoint of good diction, talk very well and speak quite as ill. If you wish to prove this fact, go into any court-house; address some lawyer of your acquaintance, and chat with him for a moment. His delivery will be natural and simple. Follow him into the court-room and listen to his plea. He is another man; all his merits disappear: he was natural, he is now bombastic; he talked in tune, he speaks out of tune—for we can speak as well as sing out of tune.—LEGOUVÉ.

When Cowper expresses his abhorrence of the "start theatric practised at the glass," all the world approves the censure, because all the world understands him to mean the affected and contemptible exhibition of one's self as the object of admiration to an assembly who are waiting to hear a message from God. There certainly is neither piety nor power in clownishness. And it cannot be denied that if some speakers had practised their attitudes and starts before a glass, they would never have inflicted them on their hearers.

The negligent speaker often justifies his mannerism on the ground of personality. Speaking of his prominent faults, he will say: "This is my natural manner; I like to see individuality of style in delivery, as in all other forms of expression; and this trait constitutes mine. I cannot change it for another, because that other, though perhaps better in itself, would not be natural to me."

This reasoning would be as sound as it is plausible in itself and comforting to indolence, were habit and nature invariably the same in individuals, and were manner inevitable and immutable, like Richter's cast-metal king. But manner in expression is the most plastic of all things; it can be moulded at will to whatever shape a decisive resolution and a persevering spirit determine. Attentive cultivation will reform, renovate, and recreate here, as extensively as elsewhere. It will enable the individual to shake off the old and put on the new vesture of habit, and to wear it too with perfect ease, as the true and natural garb of expression. *For all genuine culture is but the cherishing or the resuscitating of nature.*  
—RUSSELL.

Being endued with physical and spiritual susceptibilities, man is the most deeply impressed when an appeal is made to both parts of his sentient nature, when the eye and

the ear are delighted as well as the mind and heart. And such is the sympathy between the corporeal and the mental powers, that when the former are in a state of appropriate excitement, the latter act with increased vigor and success. The soul perceives the more of truth, and feels it the more keenly, when the eye traces the lineaments of this truth upon the countenance of the speaker, and the ear catches the vibrations of it from lips which have been touched as with a live coal from off the altar.

Valerius Maximus says of the Athenian orator, that "a great part of Demosthenes is wanting, for it must be heard and not read." Quintilian says of Hortensius, that "there was something in him which strangely pleased when he spoke, which those who perused his orations could not find." The younger Pitt remarked that he could never conjecture from reading his father's speeches where their eloquence lay hidden. And there have been thousands of preachers who uttered truths which no stenographer could seize, which no ready writer, with a command of the most extensive vocabulary, could transfer to the silent page, for they were truths that beamed from the eye, and were breathed out in the tones of the voice, and were visible in the gesture, but could not be circumscribed within arbitrary symbols.—RUSSELL.

I was once intimate with a young deputy, full of talent and learning, who deemed his deputyship merely a stepping stone to the ministry. On one occasion, he was to deliver an address before the ministers and House of Deputies, and begged me to come and hear him. His speech over, he hurried toward me, anxious to learn my opinion.

"Well, old fellow," said I, "this speech will never get you into the Cabinet."

"Why not?"

"Because you absolutely don't know how to speak."

"Don't know how to speak!" said he, somewhat hurt and offended; "and yet I thought my speech——"

"Oh, your speech was in excellent taste—fair and sensible, even witty; but what avails all that, if no one could hear you?"

"Not hear me! But I began so loud——"

"That you may say you shrieked; accordingly you were hoarse in fifteen minutes."

"That's true."

"Wait; I haven't finished yet. Having spoken too loud, you spoke too fast."

"Oh! too fast!" he exclaimed, deprecatingly; "perhaps I did at the end, because I wanted to cut it short."

"Exactly; and you did the very opposite—you spun it out. Nothing, on the stage, makes a scene seem so long as to reel it off too fast. An audience is very cunning, and guesses by your very haste that you think the thing drags. Unwarned, the listener might not notice it; you draw his attention to the fact, and he loses patience."

"True again!" cried my friend. "I felt the audience slipping from me toward the end; but how can I remedy this ill?"

"Nothing easier. Take a reading-master."

"Do you know one?"

"A splendid one."

"And who?"

"M. Samson."

"Samson, the actor?"

"Yes."

"But I can't take lessons of an actor."

"Why not?"

"Just think of it! A politician! a statesman! All the comic papers would make fun of me if it were known!"

"You are right! People are just stupid enough to turn you into ridicule for studying your profession. But rest easy, no one shall know it."

"You'll keep my secret?"

"Yes; and Samson too, I promise you."

So he set to work. Samson placed his voice, strengthened it, and made it flexible. He made him read aloud page after page of Bossuet, Massillon, and Bourdaloue; he taught him to begin a speech slowly, and in a low voice—people are hushed to hear you, and end by listening. These wise lessons bore their fruit. Six months later my friend was a minister!—ΛΕΓΟΥΣ.

**The Opening Sentences** are, for the orator, the most difficult, and he is especially to remember the importance of keeping calm, and of exhibiting no haste to begin.

A speaker should never adopt a hurried manner in opening a speech but in one instance, and that is when he takes some concluding remark of the speaker who has last preceded him, and commences his own argument with a reply to such concluding sentence. In this solitary instance he may begin his argument by the time the opposite speaker has touched his seat, and whilst the replying speaker is scarce erect in rising from his own. If an apt reply to the concluding remark, or indeed to any important remark of an adverse speaker, shall be made under the circumstances just specified, the opening remarks of the replying speaker will not only be appreciated for their own intrinsic value, but they will secure a favorable reception for the sequel of the speech. . .

As a general proposition, a speaker should not commence the business of speaking immediately on rising from his seat, but should take sufficient time to survey his audience, and to collect his ideas with every appearance of the calmest self-possession, and of respectful but easy confidence. After a few preliminary moments thus occupied, he should commence his remarks in a moderate tone of voice, and in such a way as to introduce the subject before him directly to the attention of his audience. He should take due care to begin his remarks with the briefest sentences within reach of his powers. For no circumstance is better calculated to throw a speaker out of an easy style of enunciation than a long sentence at the very opening of an argument. It requires a great expenditure of breath to speak one of these sentences through, where it is so long before a pause is reached. And independent

of the irksomeness of the operation connected with the delivery of such sentences, it is difficult in speaking, as it is in singing, to blend any particular measure of music or intonation with the speaking of them. And if the measure or music of the speaker should be wrong at the commencement of the speech, as it will be very difficult to rectify it when he has once gotten under way, his style of speaking will be apt to continue erroneous through the whole speech. . . .

Daniel Webster has pronounced eloquence to be "action, God-like action." In the celebrated debate with Robert Hayne, desire having been expressed that the discussion be deferred, Mr. Hayne said that something had fallen from the gentleman from Massachusetts which had created sensations from which he would desire at once to relieve himself; Mr. Webster had discharged his weapon, and he wished for an opportunity to return the fire. Mr. Webster remarked that he was ready to receive it, and wished the discussion to proceed. It has been said that Mr. Webster's acceptance of the implied challenge exhibited an air of majestic authority which might have served as a rebuke even to royalty itself.—McQUEEN, condensed.

Points requiring especial attention in public speaking are—(i) Pitch, (ii) Emphasis, and (iii) Gesture.

(i) **The Pitch** of the orator's voice was a matter regarded by the Greeks as so important that even the public crier was accompanied by a musician to give him the proper tone. Quintilian tells that Gracchus kept a flute-player standing near him as he spoke, and Cicero, though he thought this custom beneath the orator, advised that though the flute should be left at home, the custom of attending to the pitch should be carried into the forum (see page 557).

(a) **The Loudness** of voice should be proportioned to the place and to the audience, the general rule being to speak just so as to be heard easily by those farthest away.

A convenient practical rule has, however, been given for the guidance of speakers in accommodating the loudness and pitch of their voices to the size of the room in which they have to speak. It consists in fixing the eyes on the farthest corner of the room, and addressing the speech to those who are there situated; commencing rather softly, the voice is gradually raised until it seems to return to the speaker, not with a noisy echo, but with a sensation of its pervading all parts of the building.—HALCOMBE.

The requisite degree of loudness will be best obtained, not by thinking about the voice, but by looking at the most distant of the hearers, and addressing one's self especially to him. The voice rises spontaneously when we are speaking to a person who is not very near.

It should be added that a speaker's being well heard does not depend near so much on the loudness of the sounds as on their distinctness, and especially on the clear pronunciation of the consonants.—WHATELY.

In the selection of a pitch for the voice, when the speaker is commencing a speech, he should be regulated very much by the position he occupies in relation to the assembly he is engaged in addressing. If his position should be near the chair of the presiding officer when he commences addressing any assembly, he should speak loud enough at the beginning of his remarks to be heard by persons at the centre of the hall. If he should be standing at the centre of the hall, he should commence his remarks at the pitch of the voice which will cause him to be heard distinctly at the extremities of the hall. If he should occupy a position within four or five feet of a jury, at the opening of an address to a body of that kind, he should commence his remarks so as to be distinctly audible to them, and not louder, for his proximity to the persons he is addressing will render it ungraceful, unbecoming, and injurious to his cause to speak louder at first than has been suggested, for he may enlarge the compass of his voice as he advances in his address. If a speaker should be engaged in addressing a multitude in the open air, he should commence speaking precisely with that degree of loudness which would characterize his voice in opening a conversation with a person about the distance of ten paces from him. And he should permit his voice afterward to swell its compass so gradually that it will have attained its acme, or what may be termed the ultimate limit of its volume, when he shall have spoken about fifteen minutes.—MCQUEEN.

**Unnecessary Loudness** of tone is usually regarded as due to shallowness of thought. When a speaker begins to shout and swing his arms, a shrewd audience perceives that he is struggling not to elucidate his thought, but to distract attention from its emptiness.



When a speaker is declaiming to an audience of any description the most finished and convincing argument in a strain of loud and vehement declamation, he is regarded by those whom he addresses as one who is playing a part; he is as distinct from the audience as the magician when exhibiting his mysteries in the field of legerdemain, and as the clown in the circus who has temporarily foregone his original identity. A speaker of this description may command the admiration of an audience by the splendor of his oratorical flights, by the vigor of his argumentation, and by the dramatic skill of his gestures. But he rarely sways their sympathies and affections. They view him, while he is engaged in addressing them, as if he was a different being from themselves—as if he was making a speech, instead of talking to them upon a matter in which they possessed a common interest with him. Let a speaker of this description be succeeded by one of respectable powers and attainments, who addresses them in the familiar strain of persuasive and animated conversation, and the change in favor of the conversational speaker will prove so glaring as almost to be incredible. Why is this so? Why, it is a result which flows from the nature and constitution of man. The conversational speaker addresses them in that style which commands their attention at the festive board, at the fireside, in the fields of labor, on the public highways, and in all the simpler duties and pleasures of life. He talks to them as they have been accustomed to be talked to, and as they have been accustomed to talk to their fellow-beings, and they feel as if they would like to take part in the conversation with him.

The conversational speaker simplifies the business of speaking to his hearers so as to bring a matter home to every-day sympathies, just as a writer remarkable for the simple beauties of his style endears himself to those who read his productions, because the readers feel that the writer belongs to the same race with themselves. And as persons who read the works of a writer characterized by great simplicity of style are apt to imagine that they could have written the works they may be engaged in reading themselves, so the hearers of an accomplished conversational debater will be apt to imagine that they could speak like him themselves.

Archbishop Tillotson regarded it as the highest compliment that had ever been paid to him as a pulpit orator when, on descending from the pulpit at the close of his discourse on a Sabbath morning, he overheard some countryman who came down to London to hear him, ask a city man with evident surprise, "Is that your great Archbishop? Why, he talks like one of us." . . .

The best models for imitation in the speaking world have sanctified by their example the practice of commencing a speech on the conversational key, and of permitting the voice to extend in its compass as they progressed in their remarks, in such a way that it generally attained the pitch of a highly animated conversation about the time when they had occupied the floor about fifteen minutes.—MCQUEEN.

The strength of the voice is in an inverse ratio to the respiration. The more we are moved the less loudly we speak; the less the emotion, the stronger the voice. In emotion the heart seems to mount to the larynx, and the voice is stifled. A soft tone should always be an affecting tone, and consist only of a breath. Force is always opposed to power. It is an error to suppose that the voice must be increased as the heart is laid bare. The lowest tones are the best understood. If we would make a low voice audible, let us speak as softly as we can.

Go to the sea-shore when the tempest rages. The roar of the waves as they break against the vessel's side, the muttering thunders, the furious wind-gusts render the strongest voice impotent. Go upon a battle-field when drums beat and trumpets sound. In the midst of this uproar, these discordant cries, this tumult of opposing armies, the leader's commands, though uttered in the loudest tones, can scarcely be heard; but a low whistle will be distinctly audible. The voice is intense in serenity and calm, but in passion it is weak.

Let those who would bring forward subtle arguments against this law remember that logic is often in default when applied to artistic facts.

A concert is given in a contracted space, with an orchestra and a double-bass. The double-bass is very weak. Logic would suggest two double-basses in order to produce a stronger tone. Quite the contrary. Two double-basses give only a semi-tone, which half a double-bass renders of itself. So much for logic in this case.

The greatest joy is in sorrow, for here there is the greatest love. Other joys are only on the surface. We suffer and we weep because we love. Of what avail are tears? The essential thing is to love. Tears are the accessories; they will come in time, they need not to be sought. Nothing so wearies and disgusts us as the lachrymose tone. A man who amounts to anything is never a whimperer.

Take two instruments in discord and remote from each other. Logic forbids their approach lest their tones become more disagreeable. The reverse is true. In bringing them together, the lowest becomes higher and the highest lower, and there is an accord.

Let us suppose a hall with tapestries, a church draped in black. Logic says "Sing more loudly." But this must be guarded against, lest the voice becomes lost in the draperies. The voice should scarce reach these too heavy or too sonorous partitions, but leaving the lips softly, it should pulsate through the audience and go no further.

An audience is asleep. Logic demands more warmth, more fire. Not at all. Keep silent, and the sleepers will waken.—DELSARTS.

Better be cold than affect to feel. In truth, nothing is so cold as assumed, noisy enthusiasm. Its best emblem is the northern blast of winter, which freezes as it roars.—CHANNING.

A little girl was asked by her mother, on her return from church, how she liked the preacher. "Didn't like him at all," was the reply. "Why?" asked the mother. "'Cause he preached till he made me sleepy, and then he hollered so loud he wouldn't let me go to sleep."

(b) **The Final Words** of the sentence must not be neglected, or obscured by the mannerism of a fixed cadence.

"Both readers and preachers should remember the old rule: 'Take care of the end of the sentence, and the beginning will take care of itself.' Some preachers are in the habit of suddenly lowering the voice for the purpose of rendering the importance of some concluding remark more deeply felt. Let them be warned against the consequence which frequently follows, viz., that of becoming inaudible except to the nearest listeners.

"In endeavoring to avoid the fault of concluding sentences inaudibly, some readers and speakers fall into an opposite error. They terminate almost every sentence with the upward slide of the voice, or rising inflection. . . . No doubt this method may make the concluding words better heard, but this object is not effected without injury to the sense of the passage, and pain to the cultivated ear of taste."

Articulation plays an immense part in the domain of reading. Articulation, and articulation alone, gives clearness, energy, passion, and force. Such is its power that it can even overcome deficiency of voice in the presence of a large audience. There have been actors of the foremost rank, who had scarcely any voice. Potler had no voice. Monvel, the famous Monvel, not only had no voice, he had no teeth! And yet no one ever lost a word that fell from his lips: and never was there a more delightful, more moving artist than he, thanks to his perfect articulation. The best reader I ever knew was M. Andrieux, whose voice was not only weak, but worn, hoarse, and croaking. Yet his perfect enunciation triumphed over all these defects.—LEGOUVÉ.

**II. Emphasis** is dependent partly upon (a) Stress, but even more so upon (b) Punctuation.

(a) **Stress** may be used (1) for Perspicuity, or (2) for Power.

There are two principal kinds of emphasis, (1) emphasis of sense, (2) emphasis of force. Emphasis of sense is that emphasis which

marks and indicates the meaning or sense of the sentence; and which being transferred from word to word has the power to change the particular meaning of the sentence. In other words, it is the placing on the particular word which carries the main point of the sentence, or member of the sentence, the inflection due to such sentence or member, and giving weight or emphasis to such inflection:—the word so marked and distinguished is called the emphatic word.

Thus, *Did you reach home to-day? Did you reach home to-day? etc.*

Emphasis of force (or it might be called Emphasis of feeling) is that emphasis or stress which a speaker uses arbitrarily to add force to some particular word or phrase; not because the sense or meaning intended to be conveyed requires it, but because the force of his own feeling dictates it.—VANDENHOFF.

(1) **Sentences** that depend for their meaning upon the selection of some particular word for stress are to that extent ambiguous, and should often be reconstructed (compare page xx).

*Kan* in Chinese signifies at the same time the roof of a house, a cellar, well, chamber, bed—the inflection alone determines the meaning. Roof is expressed by the falling, cellar by the rising inflection. The Chinese note accurately the depth and acuteness of sound, its intervals, and its intensity.

We can say “It is pretty, this little dog,” in six hundred and seventy-five different ways. Some one would do it harm. We say: “This little dog is pretty, do not harm it.” “It is pretty because it is so little.” If it is a mischievous or vicious dog, we use pretty in an ironical sense. “This dog has bitten my hand. It is a pretty dog, indeed.” Etc.—DELSARTE.

(2) **Words** which require marked stress of voice to show that they are emphatic should be avoided in speech, on the same principle that italicised words are avoided in print, and gestures are avoided in conversation. An intelligent person should be able so to construct his senten-

ces that the position of each word will indicate its relative importance. To italicise a word, to thunder it, or to mark it by a gesture, is like writing underneath a picture, "This is not a cow, but a rosebud." The picture ought to be painted accurately enough to show what it is without an inscription; the sentence ought so to place the words that their force is inevitable.

**Sing-Song**, or the repetition of stress at regular intervals, is a fatal defect in prose composition. (See chapter on Rhythm, Part VI.)

There can be no doubt that the school methods of scanning poetry, and of reading prose by punctuation, are directly productive of this worst and most prevailing oratorical taint (sing-song). It is but rarely that a reader of poetry can be found whose voice is entirely free from this blemish; and the habit of reading with a rhythmical regularity is speedily extended from poetry to prose, so that the expressive irregularity of prosaic rhythm is entirely lost in the uniformity of time to which the reader's voice is set. Like the pins in the barrel of an organ, his accents come precisely in the same place at every revolution of a sentence, striking their emphasis, at one turn, upon a pronoun or a conjunction, and, at another, impinging sonorously on an article or an expletive.

'Tis education forms the common mind;  
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined.

The little twigs in the grammar-school are sedulously bent into the barrel-organ shape, and pegged to play their destined tune by the systematic teaching of the school; and when the tiny twig-barrel has swelled into a full-grown cylinder, and rolls forth its cadences in far-sounding pitch, the old pegs are still there, striking the old chords in the old way.—BELL.

(b) **Oral Punctuation** is not only different from written punctuation (see page 256), but often directly at variance with it.

The first principle of accurate punctuation is that the subject

and predicate should not be separated by a grammatical pause ; the first principle of good reading is, that they should be separated by a marked suspension of the voice. So much value may we attach to punctuation as a guide to the reader.—HALCOMBE.

Rhetorical punctuation subdivides for the taste, the judgment, and the ear, and regards pauses as the means by which the hearer may follow and understand the reader or speaker, and the latter is enabled at such pauses or rests to supply his lungs with air by the act of inspiration, and so ensure clear tone of voice and distinct articulation in delivery. Rhetorical punctuation is a system which does not so much regard the actual duration in point of time of the various pauses introduced, as it does the places where, in reading or speaking, they may be properly and effectively introduced.

The shortest pause is necessarily introduced at the end of every oratorical word ; the middle pause at the end of any distinct part of a proposition ; and the longest pause at the termination of an important division of a discourse. The rhetorical sense, not the grammatical expression, determines the relative situation and length of each pause.

Rules for rhetorical pause. Pause and replenish the lungs with breath :

- i.* After the nominative, when it consists of several words, or of one important word. A pause after a pronoun in the nominative case is admissible only when it is emphatic.
- ii.* Before and after all parenthetical, explanatory, and intermediate clauses.
- iii.* After words in apposition or in opposition.
- iv.* Before relative pronouns.
- v.* Before and after clauses introduced by prepositions.
- vi.* Between the several members of a series.
- vii.* Before all conjunctions ; and after all conjunctions which introduce important words, clauses, or sentences.
- viii.* Between all nouns and pronouns that are nominatives to a verb, or that are governed by a verb ; between all adjectives (except the last) which qualify a noun ; and all adverbs (except the last) which qualify either verbs, adjectives, or adverbs.

*ix.* Before the infinitive mood, when not immediately preceded by a modifying word.

*x.* Wherever an ellipsis takes place.

*xi.* Between the object and the modifying word in their inverted order.

*xii.* Generally, before and after emphatic words.—PLUMPTRE.

There is a line in "The Fair Penitent" which for many years was spoken by the most celebrated actor of these times in the following manner :

West of the town—a mile among the rocks,  
Two hours ere noon to-morrow I expect thee,  
Thy single arm to mine.

It is a challenge given by Lothario to Horatio, to meet him at a place a mile's distance from the town, on the west side, well known by the name of The Rocks. And this would have been evident had there been a comma after the word mile ; as :

West of the town a mile, among the rocks, etc.

Whereas, by making the pause after the word town, and joining mile to the latter part,

West of the town—a mile among the rocks—

the ridiculous idea is conveyed that they had a mile's length of rocks to scramble over ; which made Quin sarcastically observe that they should run great risk of breaking their shins before they reached the appointed place of combat.—SHERIDAN.

The tongue punctuates as well as the pen.

One day Samson, sitting at his desk, sees himself approached by a young man apparently pretty well satisfied with himself.

" You wish to take reading lessons, sir ? "

" Yes, Monsieur Samson. "

" Have you had some practice in reading aloud ? "

" O yes, Monsieur Samson, I have often recited whole passages from Corneille and Molière. "

" In public ? "

" Yes, Monsieur Samson. "

" With success ? "

" Well, yes, Monsieur, I think I may flatter myself so far. "

" Take up that book, please. It is ' La Fontaine's Fables. ' Open it at ' The Oak and the Reed. ' Let me hear you take a turn at a line or two. "

The pupil begins :

" The Oak one day, said to the Reed—— "

"That's enough, sir; you don't know anything about reading!"

"It is because I don't know much. Monsieur Samson," replies the pupil, a little nettled; "it is precisely because I don't know much that I have come to you for lessons. But I don't exactly comprehend how from my manner of reading a single verso——"

"Read the line again, sir."

He reads it again :

"The Oak one day, said to the Reed——"

"There! You can't read! I told you so!"

"But——"

"But," interrupts Samson, bold and dry; "but why do you join the adverb to the noun rather than to the verb? What kind of an oak is an oak one day? No kind at all! There is no such tree! Why, then, do you say, 'The oak one day, said to the reed?' This is the way it should go: 'The oak, one day said to the reed.' You understand, of course?"

"Certainly I do," replied the other, a new light breaking on him. "It seems as if there should be an invisible comma after Oak."

"You are right, sir," continues the master. "Every passage has a double set of punctuation marks, one visible, the other invisible; one is the printer's work, the other the reader's."

"The reader's? Does he also punctuate?"

"Certainly he does, quite independently, too, of the printer's points, though it must be acknowledged that sometimes both coincide. By a certain cadenced silence the reader marks his period; by a half silence his comma; by a certain accent, an interrogat on; by a certain tone, an exclamation. And I must assure you that it is exclusively on the skilful distribution of these insensible points that not only the interest of the story, but actually its clearness, its comprehensibility, altogether depend."—*Ιερογυλά*.

**III. Gesture** is the element of delivery which meets most criticism, and in which instruction is most neglected. Yet oratory has not reached its highest form (see page 534) when the speaker's feelings do not *compel* him to use gesture.

The disgust excited on the one hand by awkward and ungraceful motions, and on the other by studied gesticulation, has led to the general disuse of action altogether, and has induced men to form the habit (for it certainly is a formed habit) of keeping themselves quite still, or nearly so, when speaking. This is supposed to be, and perhaps is, the more rational and dignified way of speaking; but so strong is the tendency to indicate vehement internal emotion by some kind of outward gesture, that those who do not encourage or allow themselves any, fall unconsciously into some awkward trick of swinging the body, folding a paper, twisting a string, and the like. Of one of the Roman orators it



was satirically remarked (on account of his having this habit) that he must have learned to speak in a boat.

**The prejudice** against gesture arises from its frequent use as a trick of manner instead of as an uncontrollable expression of feeling.

That the hand may deliver a truth in *gesture*, which the voice is enunciating, is most true. But it is just as true that the hand is, so to speak, the mere handmaid of the voice, and should never ambitiously aspire to a parallel importance. It is the work of the hand in gesture, not to duplicate the whole work of the voice, but only *at necessary points to reinforce* the vocal utterance. Now, as not every point which is susceptible of gesture is *necessary*, to seek to add force by gesture is simply to weaken the effect of all necessary gesture. Gesture, like all high appliances of force, must be charily used or it becomes powerless from mere commonness.

The great gesture province lies where the fact or the thought, which has all along been burning before the glance of the orator, is to be squarely brought out and driven home. It is false elocution, then, to anticipate or overshadow emphatic gesture, by any noticeable display of that which is purely subordinate, descriptive gesture. It is poor tactics to weaken the main battle by a too lavish development of the skirmishing lines.

And once more, all gesture is but an outward, and at best imperfect, symboling of the inward emotion. Almost any gesture, opposed to rule though it be, is truthful and effective, if it only be *spontaneously shot forth by the uncontrollable inward energy*. No gesture, however artistically fashioned, and with whatever nice exactness overlaid upon the vocal delivery, has in it any truth, beauty, or power, if it be merely the studied product of the art, and not the natural outburst of the inward force.

Hence, we do not think it extravagant to say, that no true elocution for any person can be taught except upon the basis of simple, direct, earnest *composition*. Teach the pupil, first, to write it *as he thinks and feels it*, and then teach him its natural and effective delivery, as thus thought and felt, and you will hit upon an enunciation and gesture that know how to do an honest work, and, still

better, know how to keep their proper place. Aside from this, ordinary instruction in either can be useful, not as teaching the pupil what he is actually to use, or just where he is to use it, but as a means of habituating him, in a general way, to an easier and more natural use of his organs and powers; so that, whenever the true impulse comes, and either bursts out into action, what is spontaneous and earnest may not be crude, angular, and ill-fitted.—*New England Journal of Education.*

**Gestures** have been divided into three classes:

First, gestures of *place*, which answer the question, *where?*  
Secondly, gestures of *imitation*, which answer the question, *how?*  
Thirdly, gestures of *emphasis*, which show the degree of the speaker's *earnestness*.

**Suggestions** as to the use of gestures have been made on good authority, as follows:

- (1) Conceive as vividly as possible the things you would locate, and yield to the impulse of nature to glance or point in the direction in which they are imagined to be.
- (2) Conceive as vividly as possible the action or scene described, and yield to the impulse of nature to imitate, being careful always to "overstep not the modesty of nature."
- (3) Yield to the inclination to strike or nod or bow for emphasis, being careful "in the very torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of passion, to acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness."
- (4) Avoid gestures for which you can give no reason.

**The Fundamental Rule** for gesture is that it must precede the verbal expression of the thought it illustrates.

Gesture must always precede speech. In fact, speech is reflected expression. It must come after gesture, which is parallel with the impression received. Nature incites a movement, speech names the movement. Speech is only the title, the label of what gesture has anticipated. Speech comes only to confirm what the

audience already comprehend. Speech is given for naming things. Gesture asks the question "What?" and speech answers. Gesture after speech would be absurd. Let the word come after the gesture and there will be no pleonasm.

Priority of gesture may be thus explained. First a movement responds to the sensation; then a gesture, which depicts the emotion, responds to the imagination which colors the sensation. Then comes the judgment which approves. Finally, we consider the audience, and this view of the audience suggests the appropriate expression for that which has already been expressed by gesture.—**DELSARTE.**

**How far** gesture should be carried depends upon the speaker's power of dramatic feeling and expression. Few would interpret gesture as minutely as Delsarte, who makes distinctions like the following:

"The deep voice with the eyes open expresses worthy things. The deep voice with the eyes closed expresses odious things. . . . We understand the laugh of an individual; if upon *e* long, he has made a sorry jest; if upon *a* long, he has nothing in his heart, and most likely nothing in his head; if upon *a* short, the laugh is forced. *O*, *a* long, and *oo* are the only normal expressions. Thus every one is measured, numbered, weighed. There is reason in every thing, even when unknown to man. . . .

"We can judge of the sincerity of the friend who grasps our hand. If he holds the thumb inward and pendent, it is a fatal sign; we no longer trust him. To pray with the thumbs inward and swaying to and fro, indicates a lack of sacred fervor. It is a corpse who prays. If you pray with the arms extended and the fingers bent, there is reason to fear that you adore Plutus. If you embrace me without elevating your shoulders, you are a Judas."

**Mimicry** is, however, below the dignity of the platform (see page 131); and descriptive gesture must be used with moderation. Many a speaker who is more correct in his interpretation, is scarcely less ridiculous in his

gestures than the boy, who lifted the skirts of his coat, as he declaimed :

Soon as the evening shades prevail,  
The moon takes up the wondrous tale.

**Finally**, gesture, as an art, should be so practised as to be unconscious.

The orator should not even think of what he is doing. The thing should have been so much studied that all would seem to flow of itself from the fountain.—*DELSARTE*.

This principle has been carried so far that a hesitating awkwardness is sometimes assumed, to convey the impression of extemporaneousness.

Mr. Disraeli hesitated much, says the *London Truth*, like Sergeant Ballantine. Before bringing out some telling and well-prepared adjective, he would “er-er-er” for a minute or two, so as to make his hearers suppose that he was choosing between half a dozen words. And yet many of Mr. Disraeli’s most effective speeches were learned by heart. He would give them to the *Times* reporter before they were delivered, and although the reporter followed the speech, pencil in hand, he seldom had to alter a single word, so excellent was Mr. Disraeli’s memory.

In reading your own discourses, your very defects are your first requisites of success. They form a portion of your own individuality. A single instance will make my meaning clear. Jules Sandeau asked me to read in public a charming reply which he had written to Camille Doucet. “I will do nothing of the kind,” replied I. “Why not?” he asked, “you read so much better.” “Yes,” was my answer, “but that particular piece of yours I should not read half so well; your discourse is yourself. In reading it I certainly should not commit the faults that you will commit. I should not drop my breath at the last syllable. I should try to bring out the strong points with higher relief. But that unstudied attitude of yours I could never catch, nor that indolent voice, nor that touch-me-not air, nor that easy-going indifference, all of which complete the effect of your words by producing your personality,—which are so charming in you, because they are so delightfully natural, but which would be absolutely displeasing in me as too unnatural, too studded, and too far-fetched. Your discourse is a plump discourse, blooming and blond; I should read it like a man who is thin, sallow, and dark. Read it yourself.” Sandeau believed me, and his success showed him that I was quite right. But if he had read any one else’s discourse in the same style as he read his own he would be a traitor.—*LEGOUVÉ*.

## THE ART OF READING.

The following extracts from the celebrated treatise of M. Legouvé, already often quoted, will suggest how truly delivery is an art worthy to be mastered.

Let us suppose a scholar who is mechanically perfect. Practice has made his voice even, agreeable, and flexible. He thoroughly understands the art of blending his medium, upper, and lower tones. He breathes imperceptibly. He pronounces distinctly. His articulation is sharp and clear. All faults in his pronunciation—if he had any—have been remedied. He punctuates as he reads. His delivery is neither hurried, jerky, nor drawing; and, what is very rare, he never drops his final syllables, so that every phrase is round and firm.

Is he a finished reader? No; he is only a correct reader. He can, without tiring himself or his hearers, read a political report, a scientific speech, a financial statement, or a legal document. All this is very well; reading is thus brought to bear upon almost all the liberal professions, so that it may rightly be ranked under the head of useful knowledge.

But it does not yet deserve the noble name of *art*. To be worthy of that, it must extend to works of art; must become the interpreter of the masterpieces of genius; only, in that case, correctness will not suffice—talent is also requisite.

From La Fontaine's works I first learned to read. My master was a very clever man, almost too clever in point of fact. He had a charming voice, which he used to excess; and he gave me two kinds of lessons, both equally beneficial to me, and by which others may profit as well as I; he taught me what a reader should do, and what he should avoid doing.

On one occasion, when he was to read some of La Fontaine's fables at the Conservatory—among them "The Oak and the Reed"—he invited me to come and hear him, saying: "You shall see how a reader who knows his trade presents himself before a large audience.

"I begin by glancing around the room; my look, all-embracing, and accompanied by a very slight smile, must be pleasant; its object is to collect the suffrages and sympathy of the audience in advance, and to fasten all eyes upon myself. I then make a little noise in my throat—hem! hem!—as if about to begin. But not at all, not yet! No! I wait for perfect silence to be established. I then extend my arm, my right arm, curving my elbow gracefully—the elbow is the soul of the arm! Interest and attention are excited: I give the title. I give it simply, without striving for effect—I merely act the part of a play-bill. I then begin: '*The Oak*,'—my voice full and round, gesture broad and somewhat bombastic! I desire to paint a giant, who stands with his head in the clouds and his feet in the kingdom of the dead.

"The Oak, one day, said to the Reed—"

"Oh! scarcely a morsel of voice for the word 'reed,' Make it as small as you can, poor leaflet; mark its insignificance by your tone; despise it thoroughly, look askance at it! All this very low and faint—as if you saw it at a distance!"

You laugh! and you are quite right. And you will laugh still more, when I tell you that in the fable of "The Monkey and the Cat," at the lines—

"One day, our two plunderers watched by the fire  
Rich, ripe nuts a-roasting, with looks of desire"—

M. Febvé rolled the *r*'s to imitate the chestnuts crackling before the fire! Yes, all this is funny, is absurd! And yet, at bottom, it is correct, profound, and true. It is true that a reader should never begin the instant he stands before his audience; true, that he should exchange communicating glances with his listeners; true, that he should give his title clearly and simply; true, finally, that he should represent and, as it were, paint his various characters by the varying tones of his voice—and if we suppress the exaggeration and affectation resultant, we have an excellent and most useful lesson, especially in regard to La Fontaine. A general impression, now passed into a principle, declares that his fables are to be read simply. Certainly! but what do we mean by simply? Do we mean—'et us be plain—do we mean prosily? If so, I say, No! a thousand times, No! That is not the way to read La Fontaine; that is disfiguring him. It is betraying, not translating him. La Fontaine is the most complex of all French poets. No other poet unites in himself so many extremes. No poetry is so rich in oppositions. His nickname of good fellow, and his reputation for simplicity, deceive us. His character as a man leads us astray in regard to his character as a poet. Pen in hand, he is the most wily, ingenious, I may say foxiest, of writers. With La Fontaine, every effect is calculated, premeditated, and worked for; and at the same time, by a marvellous faculty, every thing is harmonious and natural. All is artistic; nothing artificial. A line, a word, suffices to open vast horizons. He is an incomparable painter, unrivalled narrator. His character-drawing is almost equal to that of Molière himself. And can we suppose that all this may and can be rendered simply and straightforwardly? Heaven forbid! Deep study alone confers upon a reader the power of understanding and explaining even in imperfect fashion such profound art.

Take, for example, the fable of "The Heron:"

"One day—no matter when or where—  
A long-legged heron chanced to fare,  
With his long, sharp beak  
Helved on his long, lank neck."

Every one must feel the triple repetition of the word "long" to be a picturesque effect, which must be duly given by the reader.

"He came to a river's brink—  
The water was clear and still."

These two lines cannot be read in one and the same way: the first, simple narrative in style, must be simply given. The second is descriptive; the image must be visible on the reader's lips, as on the writer's pen.

"The carp and the pike there at will  
Pur-sued their silent fun,  
Turning up ever and anon  
A golden side to the sun!"

Oh! you don't know your trade as a reader if your gay, lively, sportive tone does not paint the antics of this frolicsome couple!

"With ease the heron might have made  
Great profits in the fishing trade:  
So near came the scaly fry  
They might be caught by the passer-by."

Simple narrative style.

"But he thought he better might  
Wait for a sharper appetite."

Mark this! here we get an insight into the bird's character! The heron is a sensualist, an epicure, rather than a glutton. Appetite is a pleasure to those of dainty stomach. Give the word *appetite* that accent of satisfaction always roused by the thought or sight of any thing pleasant; we shall see directly how useful this slight hint will be.

"For he lived by rule, and could not eat,  
Except at his hours, the best of meat."

Second descriptive verse. The heron is an important personage, and respects himself accordingly.

"Anon his appetite returned once more."

The heron is quite satisfied.

"Approaching then again the shore,  
He saw some tench taking their leaps,  
Now and then, from the lowest deeps."

A perfect picture! an admirable stanza! It expresses that romantic feeling which all of us have experienced in fishing, when a fish rises slowly through the watery veil, faint and vague at first, but growing ever more distinct, until it leaps to the surface! Paint all this with your voice!

"With as dainty a taste as Horace's rat,  
He turned away from such food as that."

The character-drawing goes on.

"What! tench for a heron? Poh!  
I scorn the thought, and let them go."

Mark the A in heron well; dwell on it—make it as prominent as his own long legs.

"The tench refused, there came a gudgeon.  
'For all that,' said the bird, 'I trudge on.'"

Here he laughs a laugh of scorn!

"I'll ne'er ope my beak, so the gods please,  
For such mean little fishes as these.  
He did it for less;  
For it came to pass  
That not another fish could he see;  
And at last, so hungry was he,—

Hungry! Do you see the difference now between this word and "appetite?" Do you think La Fontaine used this neat, sharp little phrase by mere chance? No longer an epicure, the very word is brief, pressing, and importunate as the want it expresses! Give all this with your voice, and also depict the sudden ending of the tale, scornful and summary as a decree of fate:

"That he thought it of great avail  
To find on the bank a single snail!"

#### READING AS A MEANS OF CRITICISM.

After listening attentively to my thoughts and ideas on this subject, Sainte-Beuve said: "By your reckoning, then, a skilful reader is a skilful critic."

"To be sure," said I, "you are closer to the truth than you guessed; for in what, indeed, does the reader's talent lie, if not in rendering all the beauties of the works which he interprets? To render them properly, he must of course understand them. But the astonishing thing is, that it is his very effort to render them well which gives him a

clearer comprehension of them. Reading aloud gives a power of analysis which silent reading can never know."

Sainto-Beuve then asked me to give him an example to illustrate my meaning; and I quoted Racine's famous speech on Corneille, which contains one passage specially remarkable, where he draws a comparison between the French theatre before and after Corneille. I had often read this passage to myself, and admired it much; but on attempting to read it aloud, I encountered difficulties which surprised me and gave me cause to reflect. The second part struck me as heavy, and almost impossible to render well. Composed of seventeen lines, it yet forms but a single phrase! Not a breathing-place! Not a period, colon, or even semi-colon! nothing but commas, with clause succeeding clause, prolonging the sense just as you deem it complete, and forcing you to follow it, pausing for breath, through all its endless mazes! I reached the end, gasping, but thoughtful. Why, I queried, did Racine write so long and labored a phrase? Instinctively, my eye turned to the first part of the fragment. What did I see? A perfect contrast! Seven sentences in nine lines! Exclamation points everywhere! Not a single verb! A disjointed, jerky style! All was fragmentary and broken! I uttered a cry of joy; light dawned upon me! Desiring to express the two states of the drama, he did more than describe, he painted them in words. To represent what he himself calls the chaotic stage of the dramatic poem, he employed a violent, abrupt, and inartistic style. To give a perfect picture of dramatic art as Corneille made it, he imagined a long and well-turned period, harmonious and concordant,—similar, in fact, in its labored arrangement to Corneille's own tragedies,—"Rodogune" and "Polyenctæ,"—in the skillful combination of situations and characters.

This clew once gained, I took up the book, and re-read the fragment. Let any one read it accordingly, and judge for himself:—

"In what a wretched condition was the French stage when Corneille began his labors! What disorder! What irregularity! No taste, no knowledge of true dramatic beauty. Authors as ignorant as their audience, their themes for the most part extravagant and improbable,—no morals, no characters; the style of delivery even more vicious than the action, miserable puns and witticisms forming the chief ornament; in a word, every rule of art, and indeed of decency and propriety, violated.

"In this infancy, or rather this chaotic state, of the dramatic poem in France, Corneille, having long sought the right road, and struggled, if I may venture to say so, against the bad taste of his age, finally, inspired by rare genius and aided by his reading of antique literature, produced upon the scene reason, but reason accompanied by all the pomp and splendor of which the French language is capable, brought the wonderful and the probable into harmony, and left far behind him all his rivals, most of whom, despairing of ever keeping pace with him, and fearing to dispute the prize with him, confined themselves to impugning the plaudits awarded him, and vainly strove, by their words and foolish criticisms, to depreciate a merit which they could not equal."

I think this proof decisive, this demonstration irrefutable. It is evident that the extract assumes an entirely novel aspect when read aloud. New light falls upon it, and the author's thought is made manifest. Shall I add that the very difficulty of reading this passage makes it an excellent lesson? I know nothing harder, and therefore more profitable, than to carry to a successful close this terrible seventeen line-long sentence, without once stopping by the way, without seeming fatigued, always marking by your inflections that the sense is not complete, and finally unrolling the whole majestic phrase in all its amplitude and superb suppleness. My studies as a reader were very useful to me that day: and I inwardly thanked the art which, having given me a true understanding of this fine fragment, allowed me to reveal it to others.



But every medal has its reverse ; and reading aloud has its disillusion. If it teaches us to admire, it also teaches us to discriminate. Sainte Beuve was right ; a reader is a critic, a judge !—a judge to whom many hidden defects are revealed. How many sad discoveries I have made in this way ! How many books and authors whom I admired,—whom others still admire,—failed to resist this terrible proof ! We say that a thing stares us in the face ; we may, with equal justice, say that it strikes our ear. The eye runs over the page, skips tedious bits, glides over dangerous spots ! But the ear hears every thing ! The ear makes no cuts ! The ear is delicate, sensitive, and clairvoyant to a degree inconceivable by the eye. A word which, glanced at, passed unnoticed, assumes vast proportions when read aloud. A phrase which barely ruffled, now disgusts you. The greater the size of the audience, the more quick-sighted the reader becomes. An electric current is at once established between reader and audience, which becomes a means of mutual instruction. The reader teaches himself while teaching others. He needs not to be warned by their murmurs or signs of impatience ; their very silence speaks to him ; he reads their thoughts, foresees that a certain passage will shock, must shock them, long before he reaches it ; it seems as if his critical faculties, roused and set in motion by this formidable contact with the public, attained a certain power of divination !

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**PART VI.**  
**POETRY**



## PART VI.

### POETRY.

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#### CHAPTER XXXI.

##### WHAT CONSTITUTES POETRY.

I THINK nothing can be added to Milton's definition or rule of poetry, that it ought to be simple, sensuous, and impassioned; that is to say, single in conception, abounding in sensible images, and informing them all with the spirit of the mind.—COLERIDGE.

**Construction vs. Criticism.**—Up to this point, the student has been instructed how to perform certain functions of speech. To converse, to write a letter or an essay, to make a speech that, if not eloquent, is at least not discreditable—of all these things the student may learn not only what constitutes excellence in them, but how he may attain it. He has been taught not only how to criticise, but how to construct.

But the poet is born, not made. Art may help him to realize his possibilities, but it cannot inspire them. It may aid the rest of us to recognize and delight in poetry, but it will not supply us with poetical conceptions.

Hear what he (Macaulay) says in the introduction to his *Essay on Dryden*: "The man who is best able to take a machine to pieces, and who most clearly comprehends the manner of its working, will be the man most competent to form another machine of

similar power. In all the branches of physical and moral science which admit of perfect analysis, he who can resolve will be able to combine. But the analysis which criticism can effect of poetry is necessarily imperfect. One element must forever elude its researches; and that is the very element by which poetry is poetry."

It is the old story. The botanist can take the flowers to pieces, show you the stamens, pistil, calyx, corolla, and all the rest of it, but can he put them together again? Can he grasp or recreate the mysterious thing which held them together and made the living flower? No; the life has escaped his grasp. Now this quick life, this vivid impulse, this unnamable essence which makes poetry to be poetry—these learning, criticism, study, reflection, may kill as I have said, but cannot create.—SHAIRP.

A modern poet, whose own experience and productions exemplified his words, has said: "A man cannot say, I will write poetry; the greatest poet cannot say it, for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some irresistible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness. This power arises from within, like the color of a flower which dims and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our nature are unprophetic either of its approach or of its departure. It is, as it were, the interpenetration of a diviner nature within our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only on the wrinkled sand which paves it. Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds." . . . For what is it that is the primal source, the earliest impulse, out of which all true poetry in the past has sprung, out of which alone it can ever spring? Is it not the descent upon the soul, or the flashing up from its inmost depths, of some thought, sentiment, emotion, which possesses, fills, kindles it—as we say, inspires it? It may be some new truth, which the poet has been the first to discern. It may be some world-old truth, borne in upon him so vividly that he seems to have been the first (man) who has ever seen it. New to him, a new dawn, as it were, from within, the light of it makes all it touches new.—SHAIRP.

In the description of the Transfiguration, in St. Matthew, we are told that "Peter, James, and John his brother, were brought up into a high mountain apart," and that "a bright cloud overshadowed them." Applying with becoming reverence that sacred scene, I would say that poetry is a transfiguration, which takes place only at a certain elevation, and during which those who perceive it are overshadowed by a cloud, but a cloud that is bright.

Poetry is a transfiguration of life; in other words, an imaginative representation, in verse or rhythm, of whatever men perceive, feel, think, or do.—ALFRED AUSTIN.

**The Importance** of true criticism can be estimated only by those who recognize its rarity. Destructive criticism—mere flaw-picking, usually based on ignorance or lack of sympathetic imagination—is unfortunately common; for it presents to the conceited a temptation almost

irresistible to vaunt their superior discrimination. But constructive criticism—the recognition of beauties that the usual eye has failed to see—is the chief element of a broad culture.

Speaking of a certain essay on Shakspeare by a Mrs. Montague, Dr. Johnson once said, “No, sir, there is no real criticism in it; none showing the beauty of the thought, as founded in the workings of the human heart.” That word of the stern old critic well expresses what is the true function of his own craft, the only thing that makes poetic criticism worth having—when some competent person uses it to explain to the world in general, who really do not see far in such matters, those permanent truths of human feeling on which some great poem is built. For, after all, the reputation which attaches even to the greatest—Homer, Shakspeare, and the like—depends on the verdict of a few. They see into the core of the matter, tell the world what it ought to see and feel; and the world receives their saying and repeats it.—SHARPE.

A newspaper account of poetic remodelling by a legal reporter is hardly a caricature.

“Would you be kind enough to direct me to the editor?” asked a grave and venerable gentleman with a kindly face and pleasant smile.

“He’s out,” responded the law reporter. “Is there anything I can do?”

“I am Dr. Holmes,” responded the gentleman.

“Where’s your office, Doctor? Come to see about the diphtheria? I can do as well as the editor. What is it?” and the law reporter braced himself.

“Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes,” replied the gentleman, his handsome face beaming with good nature. “I have a little poem I should like to submit. Shall I leave it with you?”

The law reporter took it and read it aloud.

“You call it ‘A Winter Day on the Prairie,’” said he, “h’m; yes.”

A blinding glare, a silver sky,  
A sea of snow, with frozen spray;  
The foaming billows swelling high,  
Updashed against the icy day.

White laden northern whirlwinds blow  
 Across the pale sea's heavy breast,  
 And fill the creamy ebb and flow  
 With stormy terror and unrest.

The storm birds fly athwart the main  
 Like rudderless, bewildered ships,  
 The stranded winds breathe sobs of pain  
 And frosty froth from pallid lips,  
 The seething milky waves, in swift,  
 Harsh struggles with the fate that binds  
 Break into frozen rift and drift  
 Against the wrecked and staining winds.

A sea of loneliness and death  
 Whose waves are ghosts; whose vales are graves,  
 Whose inspiration is the breath  
 That lurks in northern Winter caves.  
 A snowy gloom, whose icy shade  
 Lies white beneath the spray tipped crest,  
 Whose silver sombreness is laid  
 A glaring pall across his breast.

"Just so, just so," continued the law reporter. "Did you want this published as it is?"

"I had thought something of giving it publicity," replied the doctor.

"You'll have to get the advertising clerk to register it, then," retorted the law reporter. "I wouldn't take the responsibility of sending it in as it stands now."

"What seems to be the matter with it?" inquired the doctor.

"I don't think it is natural. Now, here, you take a snow-storm on the prairie and make it a sea. Then you freeze it all up and make it dash around. You've either got to thaw it out or quit dashing it. We may be able to alter it so it will do if you'll leave it."

"What alterations would you suggest?" asked the doctor.

"I'd fix that first verse so as to be in accordance with the facts; make it 'sequential,' as we say in law. Instead of having the blinding, and the silver, and the foaming billows, and the white laden winds, and the creamy ebb, and all that rot, I'd put it this way:

In township thirty. range twenty-nine,  
 Described in the deed as prairie land,  
 It sometimes snows in the Winter time,  
 As we are given to understand.

This alleged snow falls on a level,  
 It's said, some several feet or more,  
 And when the wind blows very hard  
 It drifts from where it was before.

"In that way," continued the law reporter, "you get the facts before the public without committing the paper to anything. Under your poem any man who could prove you were talking about his land could bring a libel suit, and the measure of damages would be what he could have sold it for if you hadn't written it up as a sea."

"Will the other verses do?" asked the doctor.

"I'm afraid not," replied the law reporter. "This business about the storm bird without a rudder, and stranded winds and milky waves don't prove anything. They wouldn't be admitted in evidence anywhere. I suppose you want to express desolation, but the testimony isn't good. Why don't you say :

In the place aforesaid, when the winds blow,  
 The tenants thereof don't go ab ut,  
 And such birds as find they can stand the snow,  
 Look as though they'd had their tails pulled out.

And when the said snow and wind had gone,  
 It's found the said land finds a ready taker,  
 For though you can't farm much when winter's on,  
 The property don't fall a cent an acre.

"There you get your desolation, and your birds, like rudderless ships, and at the same time you throw in a clause which lets you out of the libel by showing that the snow don't affect the value of the ground. The way you had it you would have brought all the Western settlements down on us. Been a poet long?"

"I—I—that is, I begin to think not," gasped the unhappy doctor. "But can't you do something with the last verse?"

"We might leave that out altogether, or we might substitute something for it. The last verse is a contradiction of terms. It's a non-sequitur, as we may say in law, and could have no status in court in the event of an action. You can't say snowy gloom, or white shade; and as for a glaring pall, I presume you mean the white velvet one they use for infants. I couldn't pass that in, but I might change it for you. How would this do :



It is rumored that while the snow  
 Is on the land before described,  
 It looks as though one couldn't sow  
 Seed to advantage, though this is denied.  
 Some people hold that it empties the pouch  
 To buy land in the Winter in the North ;  
 For this unsupported statement we do not vouch,  
 But give the story for what it is worth.

"This, you see, gives all sides of the question, without making the paper responsible for anything. I call that a superior article of poetry," continued the law reporter, reading the three stanzas over in an admiring tone of voice.

"But there isn't any poetry in it," stammered the doctor.

"What's the reason there isn't?" demanded the law reporter, indignantly. "Don't it tell everything you did, and don't it rhyme in some places? Don't it get out all the facts, and don't it let people know what is going on?"

"Of course it does," chimed in the police reporter. "That's what I call a good item of poetry. I think you might add startling developments may be expected, and the police have got a clue to the perpetrator."

"That isn't necessary," replied the law reporter, loftily. "We poets always leave something to the reader's imagination."

"I believe I'll go," murmured the doctor.

"All right, sir. Come around any time when you've got some poetry you want fixed up," and the law reporter bowed the visitor out.

**Definitions** of poetry abound. One of the best is the motto at the head of this chapter. Others are as follows:

The most just and comprehensive definition which, I think, can be given of poetry is, "That it is the language of passion, or of enlivened imagination, formed most commonly into regular numbers."—BLAIR.

Poetry is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science.—WORDSWORTH.

All poetry worthy of the name is "more intense in meaning and more concise in style" than prose. It is thought touched with imagination and emotion.—SHAIRP.

**As distinguished** from oratory, poetry differs in its main purpose, which is not persuasion, but contemplation.

Poetry, as poetry, has nothing to do with conduct and action. Contemplation is its aim and end. . . .

What is the distinction between the highest eloquence and true poetry is an interesting question, but not one to detain us now. Perhaps, in passing, we may say that in eloquence, whatever imagination is allowed to enter is kept consciously and carefully subordinate to an ulterior object, either to convince the hearers of some truth, or to persuade them to some course of action. On the other hand, when in prose composition the whole or any part of it is felt to be poetical, the thoughts which are poetical appear to be dwelt upon for the pure imaginative delight they yield, for their inherent truth, or beauty, or interest, without reference to anything beyond. If the writer is more intent on the effect he wishes to produce than on the imaginative delight of the thought he utters, it then ceases to be true poetry.—SHARP.

**The Ideal** is the constant aim in poetry, as the practical is the constant aim in oratory.

If it be true that

We live by admiration, love, and hope,—

that the objects which we admire, love, hope for, determine our character, make us what we are,—then it is the poet, more than any other, who holds the key of our inmost being. For it is he who, by virtue of inspired insight, places before us in the truest, most attractive light, the highest things we can admire, hope for, love. And this he does mainly by unveiling some new truth to men, or, which is the same thing, by so quickening and vivifying old and neglected truths, that he makes them live anew. To do this last needs as much prophetic insight as to see new truths for the first time. . . .

This is the poet's highest office—either to be a revealer of new truth, or an unveiler of truths forgotten or hidden from common eyes. There is another function which poets fulfil—that of setting forth in appropriate form the beauty which all see, and giving to

thoughts and sentiments in which all share beautiful and attractive expression. This last is the poet's artistic function, and that which some would assign to him as his only one.

These two aspects of the poet, the prophetic and the artistic, coexist in different proportions in all great poets; in one the prophetic insight predominates, in another the artistic utterance. In the case of any single poet it may be an interesting question to determine in what proportions he possesses each of these two qualities.—SHAIRP.

**The Prophetic** in poetry (to adopt Professor Shairp's distinction) is sometimes thought to be unreal, because it is imaginative; but it has been well pointed out that it rests on the deepest truth—on the truth that underlies incidents of experience and is fundamental in human nature. (Compare page 235.)

Aristotle says: "Poetry is more philosophical and worthy of attention than history, for poetry speaks of universals, but history of particulars." Of the same opinion was Sir Philip Sidney, who declares that it is a commendation peculiar to poetry, and not to history, to exalt virtue and to punish vice, to set the mind forward to that which deserves to be called good. "As if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the very outset the poet doth give you a cluster of grapes, that, full of that taste, you may long to pass farther." Lord Bacon gave to the world, ten years later, an amplification of Sidney's idea in the words following: "There is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety than can be found in the nature of things. Therefore, because the acts or events of true history have not that magnitude which satisfieth the heart of man, poesy feigneth acts and events greater and more heroical; because true history propoundeth the successes and issues of actions not so agreeable to the merits of virtue and vice, therefore poesy feigns them more just in retribution, and more according to revealed providence; because true history representeth actions and events more ordinary, and less interchanged, therefore poesy endueth them with more rareness, and more unex-

pected and alternative variations; so as it appeareth that poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and delectation. And therefore it was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind by submitting the shews of things to the desires of the mind; whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind to the nature of things."—HERVEY.

The view which he (Aristotle) took was concentrated in the saying, that poetry is more philosophical than history, because it looks more to general and less to particular facts. We should now express the same thing in the statement that, whereas history is fact, poetry is truth—DALLAS.

It is the prerogative of poetry to convey to us, as nothing else can, the beauty that is in all nature, to interpret the finer quality that is hidden in the hearts of men, and to hint at a beauty which lies behind these, a light "above the light of setting suns," which is incommunicable. In doing this it will fulfil now, as of old, the office which Bacon assigned to it, and will give some "shadow of satisfaction to the spirit of man longing for a more ample greatness, a more perfect goodness, and a more absolute variety," than here it is capable of.—SHAIRP.

**The Artistic** in poetry has been well described by John Stuart Mill.

He asked himself whether, if all the social ends he had hitherto aimed at were achieved, their success would really give him inward satisfaction; and he honestly answered, No! He then fell into a prolonged despondency, from which for a time nothing could rouse him. Almost the first thing which came to relieve this mental malady was the study of Wordsworth's poems, especially the *Lyrical Ballads*. In these he seemed to find the medicine he needed. Expressing as they did "*states of feeling and of thought colored by feeling under the excitement of beauty*, they seemed to open to him a perennial source "of inward joy, and of sympathetic and imaginative pleasure, which could be shared by all human beings."

This art of Wordsworth's is further explained by Professor Shairp:

First, he did not attempt to describe rural objects as they are in

themselves, but rather as they affect human hearts. [Compare pages 108, 245.] As it has been well expressed, he stood at the meeting-place where inflowing nature and the soul of man touch each other, showed how they fit in each to each, and what exquisite joy comes from the contact. Secondly, he did not hold with Coleridge, that from nature we "receive but what we give," but rather that we receive much which we do not give. He held that nature is a "living presence," which exerts on us active powers of her own,—a bodily image through which the Sovereign Mind holds intercourse with men.

The same critic speaks in another place of the poetical element in Tacitus :

But there is in him something more, something peculiarly his own, which is of the true essence of poetry—his few condensed clauses hinting all the sadness and hopelessness of his time, or the vivid scenes he paints so full of human pathos. . . .

What man is, what he does, what he should do, what he may become, what he may enjoy, admire, venerate, love, what he may hope, what is his ultimate destiny,—these things are never absent from the thoughts of great poets, and that not by accident, but from their very essence as poets.

**Questions** arise (1) as to whether all subjects are suitable for poetic representation, or only those that tend to elevate the mind ; and (2) as to the extent to which the purely subjective element is essential in poetry.

(1) **AT THE PRESENT DAY**, there is vigorous discussion whether or not the low, the vile, the morbid features of depraved life are subjects of artistic description.

We [Matthew Arnold and the writer] appear to go apart in this, that, whereas he affirms that poetry is a criticism of life, and the greatness of a poet depends upon how he has criticised it, I venture to affirm that poetry is a representation of life, and that the greatness of a poet depends upon how much he has represented ; the poetic manner being, in either case, presupposed.—**ALFRED AUSTIN.**

You have in Burns's song what, in the language of logicians, I would call the "first intention" of thought and feeling. You overhear in it the first throb of the heart, not meditated over, not subtilized and refined, but projected warm from the first glow. . . .

But what seems to me most characteristic in the poetry of the time is elaborately ornate diction and luscious music, expended on themes not weighty in themselves. . . .

Wordsworth is reported to have said in conversation, that as a poet Scott cannot live, for he has never written anything addressed to the immortal part of man. . . . All contemporary poetry, indeed all contemporary literature, goes to work in exactly the opposite direction, shaping men and things after patterns self-originated (from within), describing and probing human feelings and motives with an analysis so searching, that all manly impulse withers before it, and single-hearted straight-forwardness becomes a thing impossible. Against this whole tendency of modern poetry and fiction, so weakening, so morbidly self-conscious, so unhealthily introspective, what more effective antidote than the bracing atmosphere of Homer, and Shakspeare and Scott?—SHAIRP.

Do the Faculty of Columbia College exercise any wholesome control over their students? Wise and severe restriction would seem to be needful in many ways. We find, for instance, in the last number of that smart and lively semi-monthly magazine, called *Acta Columbiana*, such stuff as the following so-called poem :

Heavy with fragrant odors is the air,  
 And ever as a soft breeze gently blows,  
 It breathes the perfume of some blushing rose  
 That it has kissed—some rich carnation rare,  
 Upon whose bosom, crimson-flushed and bare,  
 Has lain its head in odoriferous repose—  
 And lightly fans my forehead ere it goes  
 To die forgotten, silently, somewhere.

Somewhere? Ah, love, since I have fondly pressed  
 Thy scarlet lips to mine, and learned how sweet  
 Thy kisses are—how fragrant is thy breath—  
 This secret somewhere, how easily 'tis guessed!  
 O gentle breeze! if I were sure to meet  
 Thy happy fate, I'd gladly welcome death.

Now, this style of thought and language is not suitable for any young man who is receiving his education in Columbia College. That institution should carefully look after the literary taste as well as the morality of its students; and here is one whose ideas are

but exaggerated commonplace, whose inspiration is trivial and mushy, and whose literary culture is both shallow and pretentious. The faculty ought to sit down heavily on such a student.—*N. Y. Sun.*

(2) **The Subjective** element, important as it is in poetry, must be used artistically, not morbidly.

Byron, and such poets as he, when they express emotion, are wholly absorbed in it, lose themselves entirely in the feeling of the moment. For the time, it is the whole world to them. Wordsworth, and such as he, however deeply they sympathize with any suffering, never wholly lose themselves in it, never forget that the quick and throbbing emotions are but "moments in the being of the eternal silence." They make you feel that you are, after all, encompassed by an everlasting calm. The passionate kind of lyric is sure to be the most universally popular. The meditative lyric appeals to a profounder reflectiveness, which is feelingly alive to the full pathos of life, and to all the mystery of sorrow.—**SHAIRP.**

Shall I sonnet sing you about myself?  
Do I live in a house you would like to see?  
Is it scant of gear, has it store of pelf?  
'Unlock my heart with a sonnet key?'

Invite the world, as my betters have done?  
'Take notice, this building remains on view,  
Its suites of reception every one,  
Its private apartments and bedroom too;

For a ticket, apply to the Publisher,  
No; thanking the public, I must decline.  
A peep through the window, if folks prefer;  
But, please you, no foot over threshold of mine.

ROBERT BROWNING.

**The Language** of poetry is instinctively different from that of prose (see 484, 572).

Our poetical style differs widely from prose, not in point of numbers only, but in the very words themselves; which shows what a stock and compass of words we have it in our power to select and employ, suited to those different occasions. Herein we are infinitely superior to the French, whose poetical language, if it were not distinguished by rhyme, would not be known to differ from their ordinary prose.—**BLAIR.**

**Divisions of Poetry.**—The following divisions of poetry are made by Professor Shairp.

**LYRICAL POETRY** is poetry in its intensest and purest form.

A **BALLAD** is a poem which narrates an event in a simple style, noticing the several incidents of it successively, as they occurred; not indulging in sentiment or reflection, but conveying whatever sentiment it has indirectly, by the way the facts are told, rather than by direct expression.

A **SONG**, on the other hand, contains little or no narrative, tells no facts, or gives, by allusion only, the thinnest possible framework of fact, with a view to convey some one prevailing sentiment—one sentiment, one emotion, simple, passionate, unalloyed with intellectualizing or analysis. That it should be of feeling all compact; that the words should be translucent with the light of the one all-pervading emotion, this is the essence of the true song.

**PASTORAL POETRY** expresses the lives, thoughts, feelings, manners, incidents, of men and women who were shepherds, peasants, crofters, and small moorland farmers, in the very language and phrases which they used at their firesides.

The subject of the **EPIC POEM** must be some one, great, complex action. The principal personages must belong to the high places of the world, and must be grand and elevated in their ideas and in their bearing. The measure must be of a sonorous dignity, befitting the subject. The action is carried on by a mixture of narrative, dialogue, and soliloquy. Briefly to express its main characteristics, the epic treats of one great, complex action, in grand style, and with fulness of detail.—THOMAS ARNOLD.

Other divisions, such as Descriptive, Reflective, Dramatic, etc., will readily suggest themselves.



## TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

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### **What Constitutes Poetry.**

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#### *Questions :*

1. Whether all subjects are suitable for poetic representation, p. 596.
2. To what extent the subjective element is essential, p. 598.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

### FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

THE language of poetry is particularly characterized by the use of Figures. While these are not absent from orations, from essays, even from the commonest speech of daily life, they are essential to poetry, and may be there employed with a profusion that would weaken other forms of composition.

The term **FIGURE**, called by the Greeks *schema*, and the Romans *figura*, is thought by some to have been borrowed from the stage. The word *schema* and its derivatives were employed by Greek writers to designate the gestures and attitudes of the actors and the characters assumed by them. It is not uncommon in our own language to say of a person's dress or actions, "He makes an awkward figure," "He makes a handsome figure," "His conduct is out of character." It was therefore natural and suggestive to call any striking form of speech or turn of thought a figure. Now this idea may assist us in making such a definition of the term figure as will include the notion which the Greeks and Romans expressed by the term. In spite of their own definitions, their practice shows that they understood by it any noticeable form or turn of language without regard to the question whether the word or words were changed from their proper, natural, or principal sense. They regarded the striking peculiarities of diction as characters into which words of whatever significance had been transformed. Wherefore they are termed by Cicero "attitudes of style."

The Greek and Roman rhetors made a distinction between the trope and the figure. Modern writers on this subject have re-

spected this distinction, and yet have employed the latter term in so wide a sense as to embrace the idea of a trope. A trope is, according to Quintilian, the change of a word or phrase from its proper, natural, or principal meaning into another, in order to increase its force or to adorn style. This definition is faulty in several particulars. It ignores the fact that the most natural signification of a word may be tropical, and the word that is supposed to be turned from its primitive sense is perhaps turned in reality from a derivative one. The literal or original meaning of a word is not always its proper and principal import. Nor is it philosophical to say that one word can be changed from its own signification to that of another; for many words have several well-known senses. A word may indeed take the place of another, but it stands there for itself, and in one of its own significations. The moderns confine tropes to single words, while they consider figures as belonging to words or phrases or sentences.

The most philosophical and serviceable classification of figures is that which is made by Dr. Alexander Carson :

- a. Figures founded on resemblance, as metaphor, comparison, and allegory.
- b. Figures founded on relation, as metonymy, metalepsis, synecdoche, antonomasia, onomatopoeia, periphrasis, emphasis, insinuation, equivocation.
- c. Figures in which there is an apparent inconsistency between their literal and their figurative meaning. To this class belong irony, sarcasm, epitrope, oxymoron, "Hibernicon, or the Irish trope," apophasis, synecceiosis, allusion, paradox, litotes, "callida junctura," hyperbole, interrogation, "designation by opposite extremes."
- d. The elliptical figures. To this class belong ellipsis, aposiopesis, interruption, asyndeton.
- e. The pleonastic figures. To this class belong pleonasm, polysyndeton, repetition, parenthesis, epanorthosis.
- f. Figures of arrangement, as hyperbaton, antithesis, and climax.
- g. Personification, apostrophe, exclamation, interjection.
- h. Grammatical figures. Change of cases, of tenses, of persons, of names, of numbers.
- i. Figures of a complex nature, as catachresis, euphemism, vision.—HEAVY.

**The Chief Figures** are (*a*) Personification; (*b*) Metonymy; (*c*) Synecdoche; (*d*) Hyperbole; (*e*) Irony; (*f*) Simile; (*g*) Metaphor.

(**a**) **Personification** endows the lower animals and inanimate objects with the attributes of human beings. Thus :

"I am glad," answered the bee, "to hear you grant, at least, that I came honestly by my wings and my voice."

The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Perhaps the vale  
Relents awhile to the reflected ray.—THOMSON.

It is clear that nature, who is undoubtedly the most graceful artist, hath in all her ornamental works pursued variety, with an apparent neglect of regularity.—BLAIR.

EXERCISE.—Give sentences in which the following words are personified :

Time	Spring	Sun	Hope
Sleep	Winter	Moon	Mercy
Death	Ship	Sea	Wisdom

**Apostrophe** is personification of the second person, and addresses the inanimate as persons, or the absent as present ; as “O Death, where is thy sting ?”

*Shrine of the mighty!* can it be,  
That this is all remains of thee ?

*Apostrophe* (Gr. ἀπό, στρέφω) means literally a turning off or aside, and the figure is so called because the writer interrupts the natural course of his narration or description, to address the object to which it refers.

**Exclamation** is allied to Apostrophe.

The figure of exclamation deserves a caution rather than a commendation. It is excessively used in the pulpit. Not only in the monosyllabic forms “oh!” and “ah!” but in the constructive forms, in which the whole sentence is made exclamatory, “How great!” “How important!” “How solemn!” “Awful moment!” “Fearful tidings!” There is a style, which, for the freedom with which it employs such constructions, may be fitly termed the exclamatory style. It is very easy composition ; it is a facile way of beginning a sentence ; therefore we employ it excessively. It is a sign of indolent composing. Our enquiry, therefore, should be, When may we omit it? and our rule, to dispense with it whenever we can. Dean Swift commends a reader who said it was his rule to pass over every paragraph in reading, at the end of which his

eye detected the note of exclamation. Horne Tooke denied that exclamations belong to language; he said they were involuntary nervous affections, like sneezing, coughing, yawning.—PHELPS.

(b) **Metonymy** interchanges correlative terms, as when we transpose,

(1) *The concrete and the abstract*; as, the *crown*, for *royalty*; the *sword*, for *military power*; *Cæsar*, for the *sovereign power*; the *fatal cup*, for *poison*, etc., etc. *Her Majesty*, for *the Queen*; *His Impudence*, for an *impudent fellow*; etc., etc.

(2) *The effect and the cause*; as, *drunkenness*, for *wine*; *sunshine*, for *the sun*; *gray hairs*, for *old age*.

(3) *The author and his works*; as, "I am reading *Shakspeare*;" He is an admirer of *Wordsworth*.

*Metonymy* literally signifies (Gr. μετά, ὄνομα) a change of name.

(c) **Synecdoche** puts a part for the whole; as *fifty sail* for *fifty ships*. "Consider the *lilies* how they grow," where *lilies* is put for all flowers, or for the whole vegetable world. The part in the latter case is the species, and the whole is the genus.

*Synecdoche* literally signifies (Gr. συν, ἐκ, δέχομαι) the understanding or receiving of one thing out of another. The force of this figure consists in the greater vividness with which the part or the species is realized.

(d) **Hyperbole** makes a statement more impressive by representing things to be greater or less, better or worse, than they really are. It frequently puts the whole for a part, and may then be regarded as the reverse of synecdoche; as, The whole city came forth to meet him. It may also appear in the verb; as, The French fleet was annihilated, meaning that it was disabled.

*Hyperbole* (Gr. ὑπέρ, βάλλω) literally signifies a throwing beyond, an over-shooting.

The waves rose mountain-high. She shed a flood of tears. All Arabia breathes from yonder box.

(e) **Irony** is the figure of real contradiction. Epigram means something different from what is expressed, Irony expresses the opposite of what is meant. It bestows praise in such a manner as to convey disapprobation. It professes belief in a statement for the purpose of casting ridicule upon it.

Elijah's address to the priests of Baal is a memorable example of Irony: "Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked." Job, also, mocked his friends when he said, "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom will die with you." Johnson's letter to the Earl of Chesterfield affords several examples of Irony—*e.g.*, "To be so distinguished is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge."

*Irony* (Gr. εἰρων, a dissembler), literally signifies dissimulation. It pretends to approve, in order to expose and ridicule.

**Epigram** is the figure of apparent contradiction (see page 467).

The primary signification of *epigram* (Gr. ἐπι, γράφω) was an inscription upon a statue; the sense in which *epigraph* is now used. It was then applied to a short poem (a couplet or stanza) containing a pithy or witty saying, generally at its close. Lastly, the name was applied to the witty saying itself, and hence to any saying characterized by wit and point.

But the principal figures (or Tropes, to use a common term) are Simile and Metaphor.

(f) **Simile** compares two things together, in order to show that they have qualities in common. To be effective the point of likeness should be (1) unexpected, and (2) applicable to the thought conveyed.

EXERCISE.—Complete the following similes.

*Example.*—Fortune is fickle as the wind.

Fortune is fickle—. Man's life fleeth—. The enemy fought—. The world is likened by Shakspeare—. The cultivation of the mind—. An evil conscience is like—. The seasons of the year, as well as the divisions of the day, appropriately represent—. Charity — brightens every object on which it shines.

(1) **Trite similes** arouse no interest.

What gives the principal delight to the imagination is the exhibition of a strong likeness which escapes the notice of the generality of people.—CAMPBELL.

Among similes, faulty through too great obviousness of the likeness, we must likewise rank those which are taken from objects become trite and familiar in poetic language. Such are the similes of a hero to a lion, of a person in sorrow to a flower drooping its head, of violent passion to a tempest, of chastity to snow, of virtue to the sun or stars, and many others of this kind.—BLAIR.

**Belittling Similes** are still more to be avoided than those merely obvious. Thus:

In one picture we see two lovers looking upon the sky; poetical Augustus says, "Look, Edith! how lovely are those fleecy cloudlets, dappled over the—" Edith (not in a spirit of burlesque) replies, "Yes, 'xactly like gravy when it's getting cold— isn't it?"

The belittling may however be intentional, the effect aimed at resembling that of anti-climax (see page cxxxvi).

You may conceive the difference in kind between the fancy and imagination in this way;—that if the check of the senses and the reason were withdrawn, the first would become delirium, and the last mania. The fancy brings together images which have no connection natural or moral, but are yoked together by the poet by means of some accidental coincidence, as in the well-known passage in *Hudibras*:

The sun had long since in the lap  
Of Thetis taken out his nap,  
And, like a lobster boiled, the morn  
From black to red began to turn.

—COLERIDGE.

(2) **Adaptability** is the principal test of the usefulness of a simile. Besides the recognition of it as just, there should be the further impression that it is pat to the occasion; that it brings out the thought as no other expression could.

Figures are not the utterances of blind impulse; they are rather in many cases the result of the mind's endeavors to illustrate the truth, and to prove from an appeal to the visible world that its existence is both possible and probable. "Every metaphor," according to Cicero, "expresses the thing spoken of to the senses, especially to the eyes;" and Seneca says that "by reason of human infirmity the teacher may by the help of figures bring into the very presence of his hearers those ideas which they could not otherwise understand."—HERVEY.

Thus the following simile shows too much effort on the part of the author, and requires too much of the reader:

It is not always easy to distinguish between beauty of thought and beauty of style; and it will often be found that when this quality is attributed to a phrase, sentence, or paragraph, it is traceable to the thought or conception, or mental image, just as readily as a wing lying against the casement may be traced to the carrier-pigeon that rests panting and weary on the window-ledge below.—HERVEY.

### *Metaphor Inconsistent.*

New stars have appeared and vanished; the ancient asterisms remain; there's not an old star missing.—HACKETT.

If they had been, they would not have been old. This, therefore, like many of Lord Bacon's illustrations, has more wit than meaning. But it is a good trick of rhetoric. The vividness of the image *per se* makes men overlook the imperfection of the simile.

"You see my hand, the hand of a poor puny fellow-mortal; and will you pretend not to see the hand of Providence in this business? He who sees a mouse must be wilfully blind if he does not see an elephant."—COLERIDGE.

The Marquis of Lorne was welcomed to Montreal by the mayor, aldermen, and citizens. He delivered to them a formal, written



response. Singularly enough, instead of telling them something new and instructive, or at least entertaining, he undertook to inform them on a subject with which they might naturally be expected to be more familiar than he. He assumed to tell them how Montreal sits! And how did he say she sits? He said:

Your beautiful city sits like a queen.

Now the only queen that the Marquis of Lorne knows anything particular about is Queen Victoria, his mother-in-law.

But suppose he had said, "Your beautiful city sits like my mother-in-law," how flat and ridiculous his simile would have sounded! And yet we see that must be what he meant.

Then, again, the comparison was not apt. He was anything but happy in his illustration. The Queen of England, the mother of numerous offspring, and the grandmother of a still more numerous progeny, has always been represented as very active—a busy body who seldom sits in one place any considerable length of time. Montreal is immovable, and always sits in the same place. She doesn't sit at all like Queen Victoria, who sits in a chair, and once in a while on the throne; but only a few minutes at a time.

It would have been more appropriate to say: "Your beautiful city sits like a hen," because a hen sits three weeks on the same nest; or, still more correct, to say: "Your beautiful city sits like a goose," because a goose sits four weeks in the same place. Almost any comparison would have been preferable to the one he employed.

We doubt whether the marquis's mother-in-law will be pleased when she receives her copy of the *Sun* containing this reference to her by the husband of her daughter.—*New York Sun*.

This patness will be best understood by examples. The following will, therefore, be a profitable

EXERCISE.—Point out the similes in the following illustrations, and endeavor to make the sentences equally forcible without them:

A prudent man is like a pin. His head prevents him from going too far.

Make your bed as a coffin, and your coffin will be as a bed.—  
JERROLD.

The world is as a cocoa-nut. There is the vulgar outside fibre, to be made into door-mats and ropes ; the hard shell, good for beer cups ; and the white, delicate kernel, the real worth, food for the gods.—JERROLD.

Romance and poetry, ivy, lichens, and wall-flowers, need ruin to make them grow.—HAWTHORNE.

A narrow mind cannot be enlarged, nor can a capacious one be contracted. Are we angry with a phial for not being a flask ? or do we wonder that the skin of an elephant sits uneasily on a squirrel ?—LANDOR.

A finger-breadth at hand will mar  
A world of light in heaven afar,  
A mote eclipsæ yon glorious star,  
An eye-lid hide the sky.—KEBLE.

Did you ever hear my definition of matrimony ? It is that it resembles a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated, often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing any one who comes between them.—SYDNEY SMITH.

He would as soon undertake to peddle jewelry at the door of a Friends' meeting-house.—HERVEY.

According to the laws of sound didactics, the teacher is not only to let himself down to the capacity of the learner, but to remember that the laws of the human mind demand that it should receive all instruction gradually, because, as Quintilian says, disciples are like narrow-necked vessels, which reject a great quantity of the liquid that is suddenly poured upon them, but are filled with that which is poured into them by degrees.—HERVEY.

A man's character is like a fence—you cannot strengthen it by whitewash.—*Camden Post*.

A young negro bootblack observed a neighbor poring wisely over a newspaper, whereupon he addressed him thus : "Julius, what are you looking at that paper for ? You can't read." "Go away," cried the other indignantly ; "guess I can read ; I'se big enuff for that." "Big enuff !" retorted the other, scornfully, "dat ain't nuffin. A cow's big enuff to catch mice ; but she can't."

Frenchmen are like grains of gunpowder—each by itself

smutty and contemptible, but mass them together and they are terrible indeed.—COLERIDGE.

“Look at Northcote,” said Fuseli; “he looks like a rat that has seen a cat.”

Daniel Webster struck me as much like a steam-engine in trousers.—SYDNEY SMITH.

Why, look there at Jeffrey; and there is my little friend —; who has not body enough to cover his mind decently with; his intellect is improperly exposed.—*Id.*

Florists say that a bouquet of flowers is never perfect without one yellow blossom in honor of the sun. So the expedients of rhetorical figure are incomplete without the interrogative. The instinct of earnest speech craves it, and will always have it, if the speaker's taste has not been perverted by false notions of dignity.

—PHELPS.

Unselfishness admits the full claims of all to love that is not preference. In discarding the opinion of a former time that, after all, every one had a *right* to be selfish, our age has made an ethical gain as great as the intellectual gain which Newton brought to his age by the discovery of gravitation.

Our Lord God doth like a printer, who setteth the letters backwards; we see and feel well his setting, but we shall see the print yonder in the life to come.—*Luther's Table-Talk.*

A beautiful simile. Add that even in this world the lives, especially the autobiographies, of eminent servants of Christ are like the looking-glass or mirror, which, reversing the types, renders them legible to us.—COLERIDGE.

The memory grips and appropriates what it does not understand—appropriates it mechanically, like a magpie stealing a silver spoon, without knowing what it is, or what to do with it. The memory cannot help itself. It is a kleptomaniac and lets nothing go by.—DALLAS.

If you had listened to it in one of those brief sabbaths of the soul, when the activity and discursiveness of the thoughts are suspended, and the mind quietly eddies around instead of flowing onward—(as at late evening in the spring I have seen a bat wheel in silent circles round and round a fruit-tree in full blossom, in the midst of which, as within a close tent of the purest white, an unseen nightingale was piping its sweetest notes)—in such a mood you might have half-fancied, half-felt, that her voice had a separate being of its own—that it was a living something, the mode of existence of which was for the ear only.—COLERIDGE.

Again, a person who is more properly to be regarded as an antiquarian than anything else will sometimes be regarded as high authority on some subject respecting which he has perhaps little or no real knowledge or capacity, if he have collected a multitude of facts relative to it. Suppose, for instance, a man of much reading and of retentive memory, but of unphilosophical mind, to have amassed a great collection of particulars respecting the writers on some science, the times when they flourished, the numbers of their followers, etc., it is not unlikely he may lead both others and himself into the belief that he is a great authority on that science; when perhaps he may really know—though a great deal about it—nothing of it. Such a man's mind, compared with that of one really versed in the subject, is like an antiquarian armory, full of curious old weapons, many of them the more precious from having been long superseded; as compared with a well-stocked arsenal, containing all the most approved warlike implements fit for actual service.—*WHAATELY.*

*CRITICS.*—Sir Henry Wotton used to say, and Bacon deemed the saying valuable enough to be entered in his book of *Apothegms*, that they are but brushers of gentlemen's clothes; Ben Jonson spoke of them as tinkers, who make more faults than they mend; Samuel Butler, as the fierce inquisitors of wit, and as butchers who have no right to sit on a jury; Sir Richard Steele, as of all mortals the silliest; Swift, as dogs, rats, wasps, or at best the drones of the learned world; Shenstone, as asses, which by gnawing the vines first taught the advantage of pruning them; Burns, as cut-throat bandits in the path of fame; Washington Irving, as freebooters in the republic of letters; and Sir Walter Scott, humorously reflecting the general sentiment, as caterpillars. . . . Critics have always had a strong cannibal instinct. They have not only snapped at the poets; they have devoured one another. It seems as if, like Diana's priest at Aricia, a critic could not attain his high office except by slaughter of the priest already installed; or as if he had been framed in the image of that serpent which the old legends tell us cannot become a dragon unless it swallows another serpent. . . . Hissing is the only sound in nature that can awaken no echo; and if criticism is naught but hissing, can do naught but hiss, it is altogether a mistake.—*DALLAS.*

The old Geronomite in the *Escurial* said to Wilkie, as he stood in the refectory gazing on Titian's picture of the Last Supper: "I have sat daily in sight of that picture for now nearly three-score years; during that time my companions have dropped off, one after another. More than one generation has passed away, and there the figures in that picture remain unchanged. I look at them till I sometimes think that they are the realities, and we but the shadows.—*Id.*

(g) **Metaphor** is simile without the form of comparison, one object being spoken of not as like another, but as another; as, "Man, thou pendulum 'twixt a smile and tear."

Metaphor is affirmed by some to consist in things, by others to consist in words. Aristotle comprehends *synecdoche* under the term metaphor. "A metaphor," says he, "is a transposition of a noun from its proper signification, either from the genus to the species or from the species to the genus, or from species to species,

or according to analogy." . . . These are illustrated by Aristotle thus :

A transposition from species to species is such as

The brazen falchion drew away his life ;

and

Out by the ruthless sword.

For here, in the first case, *to draw away* is used instead of *to cut* ; and in the second, *to cut* is used instead of *to draw away* ; since both imply taking something away. . . . I say, for instance, a cup has a similar relation to Bacchus that a shield has to Mars. Hence a shield may be called the cup of Mars, and a cup the shield of Bacchus. One may therefore say that evening is the old age of day, and that old age is the evening of life.

The metaphor and the simile often assist each other. The simile may first point out the resemblance, and then as the discourse quickens its pace the words denoting comparison are thrown aside as a cloak of cumbersome weight ; or, on the contrary, the too swift discourse may slacken its pace in order to state the similitude which was before only implied, as if to gather the floating cloak more closely about the person, that the runner may be more easily recognized.—HERVEY.

It is a remark of Aristotle that the simile is more suitable in poetry, and that metaphor is the only ornament of language in which the orator may freely indulge. They may be employed either to elevate or to degrade the subject, according to the design of the author ; being drawn from similar objects of a higher or lower character. Thus a loud and vehement speaker may be described either as bellowing or as thundering. A happier example cannot be found than the one which Aristotle cites from Simonides, who, when offered a small price for an ode to celebrate a victory in a mule race, expressed his contempt for "half-asses," as they were commonly called ; but when a larger sum was offered addressed them in an ode as "Daughters of steeds swift as the storm." . . .

We may say, e.g., with propriety that "Cromwell trampled on the laws ;" it would sound feeble to say that "he treated the laws with the same contempt as a man does anything he tramples under his feet." On the other hand, it would be harsh and obscure to say, "The stranded vessel lay shaken by the waves," meaning the wounded chief tossing on a bed of sickness ; it is therefore necessary in such a case to state the resemblance. But this is never to be done more fully than is necessary to perspicuity : because all men are more gratified at catching the resemblance for themselves than at having it pointed out to them.—WHATELY.

This figure [simile] occurs oftenest in those kinds of poetry which most nearly resemble oratory, namely, the passionate. Mr. Gladstone has well observed that in frequency, length, and picturesqueness of similes the peaceful *Odyssey* is far behind the stormy *Iliad*. Instead of one hundred and ninety-four it has only forty-one, and these, with few exceptions, are, as Mr. Coleridge thinks, imitated from the earlier poem.—HERVEY.

The following are examples of forcible metaphor:

Such themes given to composition pupils as, "The praise of industry," "The importance of youth," etc., are ostrich eggs, upon which the poor pupils sit and brood with their *too short* wings and make nothing warm but themselves.—JEAN PAUL.

The rude thought faculty which is not expanded into intelligence may be sharpened into cunning.—JOHN FOSTER.

The ink of female logic is blotted all over with tears, and justice in their courts is forever in a passion.—THACKERAY.

There's not a string attuned to mirth,  
But has its chord in melancholy.—HOOD.

Laughter and tears are meant to be the wheels of the same machinery of sensibility. One is wind-power, the other water-power. That's all the difference.—HOLMES.

The reason why so few marriages are happy is because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.—SWIFT.

The people's *prayer*, the glad diviner's *theme*,  
The young men's *vision*, and the old men's *dream*.—DRYDEN.

For fear their orations should giggle they would not let them smile.—FULLER.

A little boy ran away from home, and, while enjoying himself in forbidden fields, a thunder-storm came up, and it began to hail. His guilty conscience needed no accuser. Running home he burst into the presence of his astonished mamma, exclaiming breathlessly: "Ma, ma, God's frowning stones at me!"

But I will at least promise my readers that they shall *neither* find me so dictatorial in my statements, *nor* so bigoted to my own opinions as to hold myself above correction. If I offer them the rough quartz of my own digging, I shall rejoice if they extract the gold, even though they crush the ore to do so.—BLACKLEY.

**As condensed similes**, metaphors must escape triteness, of which they are in greater danger, because unconscious metaphor forms so prominent an element of common speech.

The metaphor, by passing into common speech, degenerates into a literal term; and the symbolic phrase comes at length to

be debased into a trite and unimaginative idiom. The silver coin, by daily circulation and occasional clippings, loses at last the image and superscription of Cæsar. The angular fragment which some mad storm-wave smites out of the ocean, rolls down among the shingle, and there, in all weathers, runs regularly up and down the beach, along with its more polished acquaintances, until it becomes as round and smooth as they. To the common observer its parentage is now a mystery; but the curious summer stroller finds in its complexion and veins the unmistakable evidences of its origin.—HERVEY.

Many English verbs are metaphors derived from the names or habits of animals. Thus we "crow over" a person, like a cock; we "quail," as that bird does, in the presence of danger; we "caper," as a goat (caper); we "duck" our heads; we "ferret" a thing out; we "dog" a person's footsteps; we "sneak," like a snake; we "strut," like an ostrich (strouthos), and so on.

In the following extract the words italicized are astrological terms now adapted and used without a thought of their original significance:

I should *consider* any enterprise undertaken under his *auspices ill-starred* and likely to end in *disaster*, and should *augur* most unfavorably for its success, if entrusted in an *evil hour* to one of such *sinister aspect* and *abominable* character.—BLACKLEY.

To these might be added:

*Jovial, mercurial, martial, saturnine, in the ascendant, culminate, lunatic, etc.*

PUNS sometimes enter into metaphor; as,

It was the prejudice of an exemplary schoolmaster to prefer one slip of olive to a whole grove of birch.—JERBOLD.

Even with this load upon it the metaphor may enter into ordinary speech. Thus the bank of the canal opposite the tow-path was by somebody's pun upon "toe-path" spoken of as the "heel-path." The designation, being needed, was adopted, and is now used daily by boatmen, who never dream that its history embodies an idle gibe.

**Completeness** is essential to effective metaphor: as when a very tall, lank man is spoken of as seven feet *steep*.

Wolsey's metaphor is complete when he says that this is the state of man: "To-day he puts forth the tender leaves of hope; to-morrow blossoms, and bears his blushing honors thick upon him; the third day comes a frost, a killing frost, and, when he thinks, good, easy man, full surely his greatness is a-ripening, nips his root, and then he falls, as I do."

Some care is accordingly requisite in order that they may be readily comprehended and may not have the appearance of being far-fetched and extravagant. For this purpose it is usual to combine with the metaphor a proper term which explains it, viz., either attributing to the term in its transferred sense something which does not belong to it in its literal sense, or, *vice versa*, denying it in its transferred sense something which does belong to it in its literal sense. To call the sea the "watery bulwark" of our island would be an instance of the former kind; an example of the latter is the expression of a writer who speaks of the dispersion of some hostile fleet by the winds and waves, "those ancient and unsubsidized allies of England."

Aristotle has cited several examples from Homer, as "the *raging* arrow," "the darts *eager* to taste of flesh," "the shameless (or as it might be rendered with more exactness though with less dignity, the provoking) stone," *λάας ἀναιδής*, which mocks the efforts of Sisyphus. There is a peculiar aptness in some of these expressions which the modern student is likely to overlook; an arrow or dart, from flying with a spinning motion, quivers violently when it is fixed, thus suggesting the idea of a person quivering with eagerness.—**WHAETELY**.

In general, metaphors should reveal new beauties as they are more closely studied. But they should not be pressed too far in interpretation—a frequent mistake, especially in biblical criticism. They are intended to point out likeness in a certain direction, and it should not be inferred that the likeness extends to all qualities and characteristics.



It hardly need be added that care must be taken to avoid ambiguous allusions. Thus :

When a lady living in Chelsea sent to London for a doctor, she apologized for asking him to come such a distance. "Don't speak of it," answered the M.D., "I happen to have another patient in the neighborhood, and can thus kill two birds with one stone."

**Mixed Metaphors**, or a combination in one figure of two different comparisons, are an especial danger to careless writers. Thus :

I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves their *winding sheets*. I could as soon dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning walking amid their *foliage*.—LAMB.

Here the leaves of the books in a library are first compared to the "winding sheets" of their authors, and are immediately afterward compared to the "foliage" of trees.

Campbell points out that we may say with Dryden :

All hands employed, the royal work grows warm ;

but that it is incongruous to say, "One of the hands fell overboard ;" "All our hands are asleep."

So we may speak of descrying a sail, but not of sails ploughing the main.

A fanciful metaphor may be pushed too far, as where a reporter says :

Winter has not yet departed, but is sitting *tenaciously* in the lap of spring.

Similes may be spoiled in the same way, as in the following paragraph from the *New York Herald* of October 28, 1883 :

People build houses by putting all the carved freestone and

costly embellishments on the front, and all the cheap brick at the back. Some characters are built in the same way precisely.

Here the last word is intended to strengthen, but undermines the comparison.

The following metaphor, pushed to absurdity, is from the New York *Sun* :

It was the novel on the Land League, undertaken for a weekly paper, which was the last straw on the back of that exhausted literary camel, Mr. Anthony Trollope.

The following are instances of metaphor not complete enough to be obvious :

A man's power is hooped in by a necessity which, by many experiments, he touches on every side, until he learns its arc. —EMERSON.

Channing's mind was planted as thick with thoughts as a backwood of his own magnificent land. —GILFILLAN.

Then I saw that one came to Passion, and brought him a bag of treasure, and poured it down at his feet; the which he took up and rejoiced therein, and withal laughed Patience to scorn; but I beheld but a while, and he had lavished all away, and had nothing left him but rags." —BUNYAN'S *Pilgrim's Progress*.

One of the not many instances of faulty allegory in the "Pilgrim's Progress;" that is, it is no allegory. The beholding "but a while," and the change into "nothing but rags," is not legitimately imaginable. A longer time and more interludes are requisite. It is a hybrid compost of usual images and generalized words, like the Nile-born nondescript, with a head or tail of organized flesh, and a lump of semi-mud for the body. Yet perhaps these very defects are practically excellencies in relation to the intended readers of the "Pilgrim's Progress." . . .

"And the other took directly up the way to Destruction, which led him into a wide field, full of dark mountains, where he stumbled and fell, and rose no more." —BUNYAN.

This requires a comment. A wide field full of mountains, and of dark mountains, where Hypocrite stumbled and fell! The images here are unusually obscure. —COLERIDGE.

*Back*

The following are examples of mixed metaphors :

Coleridge quotes a ludicrous instance in the poem of a young tradesman :

No more will I endure love's pleasing pain,  
Or round my *heart's leg* tie his galling chain.

"After lunch the benches were removed and Terpsichore spread her wings over the assemblage of ladies and gentlemen." Obviously this reporter was so modest that he did not like to make the customary allusion to the muse's light, fantastic toe, and so made her dance with her wings.

Virginia has an iron chain of mountains running through her centre, which God has placed there to milk the clouds and to be the source of her silver rivers.—GOVERNOR WISE.

There, where thy finger scorched the tablet-stone,  
There, where thy shadow to thy people shone.—BYRON.

I need the sympathy of human faces,  
To beat away this deep contempt for things,  
Which quenches my revenge.—COLERIDGE.

A charming old pedant in the country, on learning that a favorite pupil of his had been taken upon the staff of a Boston paper, wrote to the editor-in-chief concerning the young man : "If he should have a career I shall be very happy in thinking that the spark which I have watered contained in it the germ of a structure destined to soar and elevate with its radiance your privileged readers." He also advised the editor to "give the young man a hint that may quench the seeds of ambition ere yet they swell to a gale that will take the bits between its teeth and dazzle by its clamor."—*Boston Courier*.

At length Erasmus, that great injured name,  
(The glory of the priesthood, and the shame !)  
Stemmed the wild torrent of a barbarous age,  
And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.—POPE.

When the tongue goes upon stilts, reason spreads but half her sails.—THOLUCK.

The Court of Chancery frequently mitigates and breaks the teeth of the common law.—*Spectator*.

Take arms against a sea of trouble.—SHAKSPERE.

There is not a single view of human nature which is not sufficient to extinguish the seeds of pride.—ADDISON (quoted by Campbell).

The ethereal multitude  
Whose purple locks with snow white glories shone.

"Purple locks and snow-white glories," these are the things the muse talks about when, to borrow Horace Walpole's witty phrase, she is not finely frenzied, only a little light-headed, that's all.—"Purple Locks."—CHARLES LAMB, to Coleridge.

As late as 1860 he wrote to one who had observed symptoms more than usually redolent of "the arrow of soft tribulations."—LADY EASTLAKE, *Life of John Gibson*.

The buyer of a horse may find himself saddled with a worthless animal.—*Cornhill Magazine*, July, 1866.

A very painful condition, to which my reading can find no parallel except in the state of the old gentleman in "Æsop's Fables," who, in trying to please everybody, actually tried to carry his own donkey.—BLACKLEY.

If an individual can *break down* the safeguards which the constitution has wisely and cautiously erected, by *poisoning* the minds of the jury at a time when they are called upon to decide, he will *stab* the administration of justice in its most vital part.—LORD KENYON.

In sentencing a butler convicted of stealing his master's wine, he thus described the culprit's conduct: "Dead to every claim of natural affection, and blind to your own interest, you burst through all the restraints of religion and morality, and have for many years been feathering your nest with your master's bottles.—*Id.*"

**The Force** of simile and metaphor lies in the readiness of men to perceive and accept a comparison.

How charmingly, however, did the poor woman reply to the gentleman who found her watering her webs of linen cloth. She could not tell him even the text of the last sermon. "And what good can the preaching do you, if you forget it all?" "Ah, sir, if you will look at this web on the grass, you will see that as fast as ever I put the water on it the sun dries it all up, and yet, sir, I see it gets whiter and whiter." This is pure wit from the

well of the imagination, and the simile is deep in it as truth.—  
WEISS.

What gives the principal delight to the imagination is the exhibition of a strong likeness which escapes the notice of the generality of people.—CAMPBELL.

The English public is not yet ripe to comprehend the essential difference between the reason and the understanding—between a principle and a maxim—an eternal truth and a mere conclusion generalized from a great number of facts. A man having seen a million moss-roses all red, concludes from his own experience and that of others that all moss-roses are red. That is a maxim with him—the *greatest* amount of his knowledge upon the subject. But it is only true until some gardener has produced a white moss-rose; after which the maxim is good for nothing. Again, suppose Adam watching the sun sinking under the western horizon for the first time; he is seized with gloom and terror, relieved by scarce a ray of hope that he shall ever see the glorious light again. The next evening when it declines his hopes are stronger, but still mixed with fear; and even at the end of a thousand years all that a man can feel is a hope and an expectation so strong as to preclude anxiety. Now compare this in its highest degree with the assurance which you have that the two sides of any triangle are greater than the third. This, demonstrated of one triangle, is seen to be eternally true of all imaginable triangles. This is a truth perceived at once by the intuitive reason, independently of experience. It is and must ever be so, multiply and vary the shapes and sizes of triangles as you may.—  
COLERIDGE.

**Allegory** is a continued comparison, or a composition in which the language is figurative throughout. The Fable and Parable belong to this class. In all these compositions, abstract truths are represented by sensible objects, or human affairs are described under the image of the conduct of the lower animals, and of the processes of nature. This also involves Personification.

The Fable was regarded by Aristotle as quite different from the Parable. He taught that there are two kinds of examples, the parable and the “logos.” The latter is the fable, “like those of Æsop, and the African stories.” But this difference is owing to his having considered the parable as a case supposed, and not, as we do, a fictitious narrative.

The chief distinguishing features of the fable are as follows :

1. In the fable the qualities and actions of men may often be attributed to brutes.
2. The fable is further distinguished from the Christian parable by occasionally indulging itself in rallery and revenge. In one old Greek fable, a vine says to a he-goat, “Though you eat me down to the root yet I will yield wine enough to pour upon your head when you are sacrificed.”

3. The fable is more commonly than the parable devoted to the inculcation of ethical precepts and prudential maxims.

Herder divides fables into three kinds :

a. Theoretic, or such as are intended to form the understanding ; *e.g.*, of the dog snapping at his shadow in the water, the lamb reasoning with the wolf, or the hare hunting with the lion. Fables like these are designed to inculcate the maxims of secular wisdom.

b. Moral, or those which contain rules for the regulation of the conscience and will ; as, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise." Here we learn that the happiness of all living creatures is connected with well-directed activity.

c. Fables of destiny. As we do not always see the connection of cause and effect, we often call that the effect of fate or chance which befalls us according to the secret purpose of God ; *e.g.*, the eagle carries with her plunder a coal from the altar, which sets fire to her nest, and so her unfledged brood becomes the prey of animals which she has already robbed of their young.

d. Some ethnic fables inculcate religious duties ; *e.g.*, in the fable which represents the wagoner praying to Jupiter to lift his wagon out of the mud.

The fable suffers more than any other figure from an incongruity. Thus Matthew Arnold, in discussing the question whether the Church of England ought to be disestablished, says of the cry of the Nonconformists that it is "a little like that proposal of the fox who had lost his own tail to put all the other foxes in the same boat by a general cutting off of tails." The figurative phrase "in the same boat" introduces an image remote from the fable and ridiculous in itself. The effect of such incongruities on the mind is not unlike the impression made on the eye and the fancy by putting into a magic-lantern two pictures at a time and side by side.—HERVEY.

*Incongruity*

**The danger** in using figures of all kinds is that they will be employed for themselves, because they are ornamental or striking, and not because they best express the thought.

The more apt and striking is the analogy suggested, the more will it have of an artificial appearance, and will draw off the reader's attention from the subject to admire the ingenuity displayed in the style. Young writers of genius ought especially to ask themselves frequently, not whether this or that is a striking expression, but whether it makes the meaning more striking than another phrase would—whether it impresses more forcibly the sentiment to be conveyed.—WHATELY.

excess of  
imagery.

Another cause of obscurity in the use of imagery is an excess of imagery. This may obscure the meaning by exaggeration. It may produce the same effect by overloading a thought. Imagery not needed to illustrate a thought must tend to cover it from the hearer's sight. A hearer's power of perception may be impaired by it through mental weariness. Few things are so wearisome to the brain as a rapid review of a gallery of paintings. Aside from weariness of the eye, there is an expenditure of thought in that which the spectator must supply by his own imagination. An excessively pictorial style makes a similar demand, and produces a similar effect. Mental weariness thus induced diminishes the clearness of a hearer's perception. Such a discourse, therefore, lives in his memory only as a jumble of pictures. . . .

Excess of imagery is most hurtful when no imagery is needed. Take the following, from John Quincy Adams. His thought is this, that scientists have been obliged to coin nomenclatures from the Greek language. This is a pure fact in philology. In a literal statement it is perfectly clear ; it needs no pictorial representation. But Mr. Adams vaults into the imaginative saddle in this style :

the  
writing  
"jargon"

The sexual combinations of Linnæus, and the chemical separations of Lavoisier, are alike exhibited in Greek attire. The loves of the plants must murmur in the same dialect which alone can sound the dirge over the dissolution of water. Neither the nuptials of the blossom, nor the generation of the gas, can be accomplished but under Grecian names. The marriage and the divorce, the generation and the destruction, have found no name by which they could walk the world, without having recourse to the language of Demosthenes and Homer.

—PHELPS.

Hence, some writers speak disdainfully of figures ; and others, who admit their power, advise the neglect of them on the ground of their danger.

A new metaphor (and the same holds, though in a lower degree, of every trope) is never regarded with indifference. If it be not a beauty, it is a blemish.—CAMPBELL.

But the young author may adopt this instrument of rhetoric as freely as any other, if he will rigorously hold by the fundamental principle of all good writing, that the

most perfect expression of the writer's exact thought is the one aim to be kept in view, and that all means that help to attain this end are as conscientiously to be employed, as all means that obscure it are to be discarded.

Plutarch says that the most of those who are delighted with figures are the childish and the sensual. Such early writers as Aristotle have favored the neglect of figures by confining their chief attention to the simile and the metaphor, while such later rhetoricians as Hermogenes have confused and wearied their pupils with over-nice distinctions. Many authors have made the whole subject still more distasteful by uniformly quoting their examples of figures from the poets, thus conveying the impression that these forms of style are only suitable to poets. We need not wonder, therefore, that able writers on rhetoric still quote with admiration the epigram Ausonius wrote under the portrait of the rhetorician Rufus : *Ipse rhetor, est imago imaginis.*

For all a rhetorician's rules  
Teach nothing but to name his tools.—BUTLER.

But a rhetorician's rules teach a man also what to do with his materials, and how to use his tools. Then, just as if it were of no use for a mechanic to have a name for his tools, and so keep them in their place and be able to call for them when wanted. Archbishop Whately and his disciples have, both by precept and example, opened the mine of figures only to close it and conceal it forever after. Mr. Henry Rogers, the reviewer, says truly of their style, that "of all its characteristics the most striking and the most general is the moderate use of the imagination." . . .

Cicero compares the use of figures to the exercises of the *palæstra*. As those who study fencing and polite exercises not only think it necessary to acquire skill in parrying and striking, but also grace and elegance of motion, so the orator must use such words as not only contribute to elegance, but also to impressiveness. To the same purpose Quintilian says : "Figures penetrate imperceptibly into the mind of the judge. Indeed, as in a passage of arms, it is easy to see, parry, and ward off direct and undisguised strokes, while side-blows and feints are less observable; and as it is a proof of art to aim at one part when you intend to hit



another, so that kind of oratory which is free from artifice can fight only with its own mere weight and force; but that kind which disguises and varies its attacks can assail the flank or rear of an enemy, can turn aside his weapons and deceive him, as it were, with a nod." . . .

Lord Kames has said that in expressing any severe passion that wholly occupies the mind, metaphor is improper. He seems to have overlooked the fact that metaphor is the natural and spontaneous language of the all-absorbing passions. His lordship would have been nearer right if he had applied his rule to the proper use of allegories, or other long trains of implied resemblances. Dr. Carson is hardly less wrong when he affirms that, with few exceptions, grief, despair, or any of the dispiriting passions is seldom found to employ this figure. The book and lamentations of Jeremiah make short work with this theory.

Some rhetoricians advise us never to make use of the same word to express metaphorically opposite ideas. Others, discussing the subject philosophically, claim to have discovered that all mankind make metaphors according to certain universal laws. Thus, Richter has observed that no nation calls error light, and truth darkness. But it should be remembered that, as Glassius has indicated, the many different qualities and attributes of the same object may be used to convey metaphorically many diverse ideas. Christ is called a lion, and so is Satan. Sleep expresses at once the hopeful repose of the blessed dead, and the false security of sinners. The sun denotes happiness and unhappiness. A shadow signifies protection; also great perils and adversities. A river denotes plenty of blessings; it likewise expresses terrors and overwhelming evils. The harvest is used in both a good and a bad sense.—HERVEY.

#### HOW THEY PLAY THE PIANO IN NEW ORLEANS.

"I was loafing around the streets last night," said Jim Nelson, one of the oldest locomotive engineers running into New Orleans, "and as I had nothing to do I dropped into a concert, and heard a slick-looking Frenchman play a piano in a way that made me feel all over in spots. As soon as he sat down on the stool, I knew by the way he handled himself that he understood the machine he was running. He tapped the keys away up one end, just as if they were gauges, and he wanted to see if he had water enough. Then he looked up, as if he wanted to know how much steam he was carrying, and the next moment he pulled open the throttle and sailed out on the main line as if he was half an hour late.

"You could hear her thunder over culverts and bridges, and getting faster and faster, until the fellow rocked about in his seat like a cradle. Somehow I thought it was old '86' pulling a passenger train and getting out of the way of a 'special.' The fellow worked the keys on the middle division like lightning, and then he flew along the north end of the line until the drivers went around like a buzz-saw, and I got excited. About the time I was fixing to tell him to cut her off a little, he kicked the dampers under the machine wide open, pulled the throttle away back in the tender, and—Jerusalem jumpers! how he did run! I couldn't stand it any longer, and yelled to him that she was 'pounding' on the left side, and if he wasn't careful he'd drop his ash-pan.

"But he didn't hear. No one heard me. Everything was flying and whizzing. Telegraph poles on the side of the track looked like a row of corn-stalks, the trees appeared to be a mud-bank, and all the time the exhaust of the old machine sounded like the hum of a bumble-bee. I tried to yell out, but my tongue wouldn't move. He went around curves like a bullet, slipped an eccentric, blew out his soft plug, went down grades fifty feet to the mile, and not a confounded brake set. She went by the meeting point at a mile and a half a minute, and calling for more steam. My hair stood up like a cat's tail, because I knew the game was up.

"Sure enough, dead ahead of us was the head-light of the 'special.' In a daze I heard the crash as they struck, and I saw cars shivered into atoms, people mashed and mangled and bleeding and gasping for water. I heard another crash as the French professor struck the deep keys away down on the lower end of the southern division, and then I came to my senses. There he was at a dead stand-still, with the door of the fire-box of the machine open, wiping the perspiration off his face and bowing at the people before him. If I live to be a thousand years old I'll never forget the ride that Frenchman gave me on a piano."—*Times-Democrat*.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### RHYTHM.

Though the poet's matter nature be,  
His art doth give the fashion. . . .  
For a good poet's made as well as born.—BEN JONSON.

O many are the poets that are sown  
By nature, men endowed with highest gifts,  
The vision and the faculty divine ;  
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,  
Which, in the docile season of their youth,  
It was denied them to acquire, through lack  
Of culture, and the inspiring aid of books.—WORDSWORTH.

**Prose and Poetry Distinguished.**—We have seen that one of the characteristics of poetry is Figurative Language, and that this, though not essential to the essay and the oration, is frequent in all prose writing.

We come now to Rhythm, another feature of poetry, and the one most readily recognized. This, though commonly regarded as essential to poetry, is not merely unessential, but positively weakening to prose. Hence those who have no ambition to be poets are still interested in Rhythm, which they must understand in order to be sure of avoiding it in prose.

**Rhythm** is the recurrence of accent at regular measured intervals.

Sounds that are produced by regular periodical vibrations are known as tones. Such are the sounds of the voice in singing. To this steady, prolonged, anticipated sound the ear becomes ac-

customed in singing, where tone is expected ; but in discourse a break into musical tones would be startling, and, unless to attain some peculiar effect, intolerable. It requires of the ear a readjustment, which is disagreeable because it is unreasonable.

So of rhythm. In poetry the ear adjusts itself to the regular recurrence of emphasis, and is shocked if the recurrence is interrupted. But in prose no such recurrence of emphasis is expected. When the ear first perceives it, it is incredulous ; the attention is distracted from the meaning in the effort to listen closely and see if indeed what purports to be prose has been measured out into metrical feet ; and if this proves to be true, the ear is disgusted at the lack of fitness.

In going down stairs, the foot learns the intervals, and descends easily in absolute darkness, accepting regular intervals as characteristic of stairs ; but in free walking one rebels against having his steps measured for him. Nothing more fatigues one than to stride from tie to tie on a railroad track.

One form of favorite mechanism in construction is that in which a regular succession occurs, like the swing of a pendulum. In other instances in which one feels the sense of monotony, but cannot at once detect the cause, it is found, on a closer scrutiny, that the sentences have more than two variations, but they occur in one invariable order, with the sameness of a treadmill. Dr. Johnson's style sometimes falls into this monotone of mechanism. Hazlitt criticises it, saying that to read or to hear such passages from Johnson's writings is as bad as being at sea in a calm, in which one feels the everlasting monotony of the ground-swell. Charles Dickens sometimes falls under the tyranny of his ear in composing ; and then his style assumes an arbitrary succession of a few constructions, in which thought is subordinated to euphony of expression. A roll and a swell and a return, in the *boom* of the style, if I may speak so incongruously, destroy the sense of everything but the sound. One is tempted to chant the passage.

—PHELPS.

Robert G. Ingersoll, in a recent interview, talked in this way of George Eliot. The statement appears as prose, but the merest typographical arrangement makes it passable blank verse, as witness :

She carried in her tender heart  
 The burdens of our race. She looked  
 Through pity's tears upon the faults  
 And frailties of mankind. She knew  
 The springs and seeds of thought and deed,  
 And saw with cloudless eyes through all  
 The winding ways of greed, ambition,  
 And deceit—where folly vainly plucks,  
 With thorn-pierced hands the fading flowers  
 Of selfish joy—the highway of eternal light.  
 Whatever her relations may have been,  
 No matter what I think or others say,  
 Or how much all regret  
 The one mistake in all her loving life,  
 I feel and know that in the fearless court  
 Where her own conscience sat as truest judge,  
 She stood acquitted, pure as light,  
 And stainless as a star.

At this rate the colonel will prove a formidable rival to the spring poets and to the sweet singer of Michigan.—*Albany Argus*.

Of the same speaker the New York *Sun* makes another criticism, based on the sound rule that prose is never to seem attired in the garb of poetry.

As an orator Colonel Ingersoll, of Peoria, drops too much into the sing-song, and as a rhetorician he indulges too frequently a weakness for alliterative speech. Here are a few random phrases from his address in the Academy of Music night before last :

- "The chill of chains."
- "Shared the gloom and glory of the seven sacred years."
- "The war was waged and won."
- "Forged new fetters for their fellow-men."
- "Our fathers fought for freedom."
- "The stream went singing to the seas."
- "Made merchandise of men."
- "Mere legal lies, mean and meaningless, base and baseless."

The habit seems to be growing on the Colonel, and he will no doubt be obliged to us for pointing out the fact. An excessive dependence upon alliteration's artful aid may mar the effect of extremely eloquent elocution.

**Critics differ** as to whether poetry must be rhythmical.

On the one hand :

After some preliminary remarks, the lecture really commences with the answer to the question, What is poetry? To this Mr. Dobell replies that "Poetry is whatever may congruously form part of a poem; perfect poetry is whatever may congruously form part of a perfect poem," an answer, as it appears to us, not unlike the well-known one to the question of, What was an archdeacon? "A man who discharges archidiaconal functions." He then proceeds to consider the nature of a perfect poem, and in order to do this he assumes that "it is the perfect expression of a perfect mind." There seems here to be a tacit assumption that a perfect mind could only find its expression in poetry; but there is apparently no reason why such a mind should not find its manifestation in prose equally well; for in the definition given by Mr. Dobell of a perfect poem—*i. e.*, the expression of the attributes to know, to love, to worship, and to order—there is nothing which would be inconsistent with prose. The consequence of this theory would be that metre is unessential to poetry, a consequence which is definitely accepted by Walt Whitman and the more extreme members of the spasmodic school generally, but which has as yet found but little credence with the public in general.—*Spectator*, July 1, 1876.

On the other :

First and foremost, the representation must be a representation in language, and not only in language but in verse or rhythm.—ALFRED AUSTIN.

The pleasure afforded by poetic rhythm is that of expecting the fulfilment of a recognized law of cadence, while the pleasure afforded by prose rhythm is that its cadences shall come upon us by surprise.—*Appleton's Journal*.

Thirdly, I deduce the position from all the causes elsewhere assigned, which render metre the proper form of poetry, and poetry imperfect and defective without metre. . . .

It is indeed worthy of remark that all our great poets have been

good prose writers, as Chaucer, Spenser, Milton; and this probably more from their just sense of metre. For a true poet will never confound verse and prose; whereas it is almost characteristic of indifferent prose writers that they should be constantly slipping into scraps of metre. . . .

Poetry is not the proper antithesis to prose but to science. Poetry is opposed to science, and prose to metre.—COLERIDGE.

Again, Coleridge says :

The definition of good Prose is—proper words in their proper places; of good Verse—the most proper words in their proper places. The propriety in either case is relative. The words in prose ought to express the intended meaning and no more; if they attract attention to themselves it is in general a fault. . . . But in verse you must do more; there the words, the *media*, must be beautiful, and ought to attract your notice—yet not so much and so perpetually as to destroy the unity which ought to result from the whole poem (vi. 468).

Henry Morley defines prose as follows :

The word *prose* means straightforward. It is derived from the Latin *prosus*, and so was the name of a Roman goddess, *Prosa*, also called *Prosa*, who presided over births with the head foremost. Prose signifies, therefore, the direct manner of common speech, without twists or unusual ways of presentation.

He remarks thus upon Coleridge's definition :

The definition may be handy, but it is not true. No writer of prose would wish to use second-best words. Setting aside the difference that lies deep in the nature of thought, there remains only the mechanical distinction that verse is a contrivance for obtaining by fixed places of frequently recurring pause and elevation of the voice, by rhyme and other devices, a large number of places of fixed emphasis, that cause stress to be laid on every important word, while they set thought to music. Whatever will bear this continuous enforcement is fit matter for verse; but the customary, though put into words that fit it perfectly, are therefore the best, is less intense, and therefore is best expressed in the straightforward method of our customary speech.



Good poetry might be defined "elegant and decorated language in metre, expressing such and such thoughts," and good prose composition as "such and such thoughts expressed in good language;" that which is primary in each being subordinate in the other.—WHATELY.

Again, Coleridge will not hear of the doctrine that between the language of prose and that of metrical composition there is no essential difference. For since poetry implies more passion and greater excitement of all the faculties than prose, this excitement must make itself felt in the language that expresses it. Of this excited natural feeling, metre is the natural vehicle—metre, which has its origin in emotion, tempered and mastered by will; or, as Coleridge expresses it, metre, which is the result of the balance which the mind strikes by voluntary effort to check the working of passion. Hence as the use of metrical language implies a union of spontaneous impulse and voluntary purpose, both of these elements ought to reflect themselves in the poet's diction. . . .

But however and whenever the one inspiring impulse finds words to embody it, one thing is certain,—that embodiment must be in language which has in it rhythm and melody. . . .

Prose, Coleridge used to say, is the opposite not of poetry, but of verse or metre—a doctrine which, however contrary to common parlance, commends itself at once to all who think about it. If, as I have been accustomed in these lectures to say, "poetry is the expression, in beautiful form and melodious language, of the best thoughts and the noblest emotions which the spectacle of life awakens in the finest souls," it is clear that this may be effected by prose as truly as by verse, if only the language be rhythmical and beautiful. . . . In that essay he (Mr. Shadworth Hodgson) says: "Metre is not necessary to poetry, while poetry is necessary to metre." Again, "Prose, when it rises into poetry, becomes as nearly musical as language without metre can be: it becomes rhythmical."—SHARPE.

Perhaps no stronger support could be given the theory that rhythm is essential to poetry than the fact that Mr. Ruskin, in a book recently published on "Elements of English Prosody," now holds that the definition of poetry in the opening of the third volume of "Modern Painters" is defective, and adds to it the words in italics:

Poetry is the presentment, *in musical form*, to the imagination of noble grounds for the noble emotions.

Leigh Hunt says:

Fitness and unfitness for song or metrical excitement just make all the difference between a poetical and a prosaic subject; and the reason why verse is necessary to the form of poetry is, that the perfection of poetical spirit demands it; that the circle of enthu-

siasm, beauty, and power is incomplete without it. I do not mean to say that a poet can never show himself a poet in prose; but that, being one, his desire and necessity will be to write in verse; and that if he were not able to do so, he would not and could not deserve his title.

#### VERSIFICATION.

**English Verse** is characterized by Rhythm, or the recurrence of stress, beat, or accent, at regular intervals.

In this respect, English metre differs from the classical metres, which are constructed principally according to the *quantity* of syllables; though modified by the rhythm in many instances. Thus, in English verse, we speak of syllables as accented or unaccented, while Latin verse is measured by syllables regarded as *long* or *short*.

**RHYME** is given to a large proportion of English verse, but is by no means essential. Indeed the noblest verse is free from its hampering restrictions.

Perfect rhymes must comply with the following rules:

(a) The vowel sounds and final consonants of the rhyming syllables must be *the same*; and the consonant sounds preceding them must be *different*.

Thus, *r-ing* rhymes with *s-ing*, *k-ing*, *sl-ing*; but not with *s-ang*, or *k-ind*, or *err-ing*.

(b) The rhyming syllables must both have the strong accent.

Thus, *ring* rhymes with *sing*, but not with *pleasing*.

When the second line ends in a trisyllable, accented on the antepenultimate, no accent is required on the ultimate.

(c) The penultimate syllables may rhyme, provided the ultimates are identical and weak in accent.

Thus, *beár-ing* rhymes with *teár-ing*.

(d) The antepenultimate syllables may rhyme, provided

the two last syllables are identical in the two lines, and both are weak in accent.

Thus, *impór*-tunate rhymes with *fór*-tunate.

The Rhythm sometimes requires words to be slightly changed in pronunciation, so as to suit a particular measure. This is done—

(1) By *contraction*, so as to reduce the number of syllables.

Thus, *'tis*, for it is; *o'er*, for over; *ta'en*, for taken; *I've*, for I have; *cunning'st*, for cunningest; *pow'r*, for power; *spir'tu'l*, for spiritual; *m'ght-test*, for mightiest.

(2) By *expansion*, to increase the number of syllables.

Thus, *th(o)rough*, for through; *command(e)ment*, for commandment; *drenché'd*, for drenched; *na-ti-on*, for nation.

The number of words in the English language which form perfect rhymes is so limited that some slight deviations from the above rules are sanctioned by the practice of the best poets, and are called *allowable* rhymes. In allowable rhymes the final consonant sounds remain the same, and the vowel sound is *modified*.

Thus, sun, upon; adores, powers; war, car; love, move; lost, coast.

EXERCISE.—Give perfect rhymes for each of the following words:

Grace, match, detract, gladden, invade, safe, epitaph, chain, taking, flame, trance, chant, lapse, beware, grave.

Speech, creak, conceal, extreme, gleaning, heard, cease, death, shred, steed, sweep, offence, islander, wariness, bedew.

Bribe, slid, Ides, midst, defy, brief, drift, thrilling, guileless, shrine, spring, sire, desist, united, driven, guise, lisp.

Throb, shewed, scoffer, voice, anoint, spoke, golden, stolen, prone, song, brood, roofless, gloomy, grope, forswore.

Rude, judge, skull, overruling, sun, importune, blunt, spur, numberless, birds, nurse, dangerous, persecute, mistrust.

Point out which of the following rhymes are allowable, and which are to be condemned. Show what rules the latter violate.

So some rats of amphibious nature,  
Are either for the land or water.—BUTLER.

Wine or delicious fruits unto the taste,  
A music in the ears will ever last.—**JOHNSON.**

Yet to his guest though no way sparing,  
He ate himself the rind and paring.—**POPE.**

And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,  
Was beat with fist instead of a stick.—**BUTLER.**

That jelly's rich, this wine is healing,  
Pray dip your whiskers and your tail in.—**POPE.**

Whose yielded pride and proud submission,  
Her heart did melt in great compassion.—**SPENSER.**

Pleased to the last he crops the flowery food,  
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.—**POPE.**

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile.—**GRAY.**

Much converse do I find in thee,  
Historian of my infancy.—**WORDSWORTH.**

Oh! not in cruelty, not in wrath,

'Twas an angel visited the green earth.—**LONGFELLOW.**

"You can't," said Tom to hisping Bill,  
"Find any rhyme for month."—  
"There you mighthake," did Bill reply,  
"I'll find a rhyme at wonth."

I wish I were a cassowary  
Upon the plains of Timbuctoo;  
I'd like to eat a missionary,  
Flesh and bones and hymn-book too.

**Measures** (or Feet) are the equivalent parts, each consisting of some uniform combination of accented and unaccented syllables, into which the line (or verse) is divided.

**Three kinds** of feet give a fair clue to English versification, and are all that we need here to consider. These are:

(a) **Iambic**, in which the even syllables are accented;

as,

And for | this draught | all kinds | of fruit,  
Grape syr | -up, squares | of col | -ored ice,  
With cher | -ries served | in drifts | of snow.—*Sick King in Bokhara.*

(b) **Trochaic**, in which the odd syllables are accented ; as,

In her | lovely | silken | murmur.—*Lady Geraldine*.

(c) **Anapæstic**, in which two unaccented syllables are followed by an accented one ; as,

I have read | in an old | and a mar | -vellous tale.

When the accented syllable comes first, the feet are called **Dactyls** ; as,

Jupiter, | great and om | -nipotent.

**The Pause** (or *Cæsura*) is that point in the verse (or line) where the sense and rhythm both admit of a momentary interruption of the latter. The pause cannot be made in the middle of a word ; but, with this exception, it may fall at any part of the verse. Besides the pause in the course of the line, there is generally one also at the end of the line, as there the sense is usually interrupted. Not always, however ; *e.g.*:

Nor content with such  
Audacious neighbourhood.—*MILTON*.

What cannot you and I perform | upon  
The unguarded Duncan ? | What not put upon  
His spongy officers.—*SHAKESPEARE*.

**Variety** is given to verse as follows :

(a) **Other feet** than those that characterize the stanza are introduced ; as,

How sweetly did they float upon the wings  
Of silence through the empty-vaulted night,  
At every fall smoothing the raven down  
Of darkness till it smiled.—*MILTON*.

Here the third foot of the third verse is a trochaic instead of an iambic.

(b) **Syllables** are appended to the verse after the regular measure is completed ; as,

Wherefore | rejoice ? | That Cæs | -ar comes | in tri | -umph ?—*SHAKESPEARE*.

**(c) The first foot is contracted ; as,**

Or ush | -ered with | a show | -er still,  
When | the gust | hath blown | his fill.—MILTON.

The last line might be read as trochaic :

When the | gust hath | blown his | fill.

From isolated lines, sometimes even from stanzas, it is impossible to determine whether the measure of the poem is iambic or trochaic.

**(d) The pause is always varied in good verse ; as,**

The quality of mercy | is not strained. |  
It droppeth, | as the gentle rain from heav'n ^  
Upon the place beneath. | It is twice bless'd ; |  
It blesseth him that gives, | and him that takes. |  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; | it becomes ^  
The thronéd monarch better than his crown. | —SHAKSPERE.

In this passage, the pauses occur in the different lines respectively after the following syllables : First line, seventh and tenth ; second line, third ; third line, sixth and tenth ; fourth line, seventh and tenth ; fifth line, seventh ; sixth line, tenth.

**(e) By combining verses of different lengths, and varying the order of rhymes ; as,**

No war, or battle's sound,  
Was heard the world around ;  
The idle spear and shield were high uphung,  
The hooked chariot stood,  
Unstain'd with hostile blood ;  
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng ;  
And kings sat still with awful eye,  
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.—  
MILTON, *Ode on the Nativity.*

**(f) Broken verses** are often introduced in blank verse, especially in dramatic dialogue, where frequently one part of a verse is spoken by one person, and the rest by another ; as,

*Shylock.* Cursed be my tribe,  
If I forgive him !  
*Basanio.* Shylock, do you hear ?—SHAKSPERE.

Shakspeare often uses these broken verses in the quick interchange of passionate dialogue, and to indicate abrupt changes of feeling.

**Irregular Measure** is a term applied to verse which is not composed of complete feet. Such verse usually lacks one or more syllables at the close, owing to the awkwardness of double rhymes, and the tendency to throw off a final weak syllable. The general character of irregular measure is cheerful and lively.

Irregular verses are of various lengths, from *one foot to eight*; but the most common are Tetrameters (complete and defective), as,

Tell me not in mournful numbers,  
"Life is but an empty dream,"  
For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
And things are not what they seem.—LONGFELLOW.

Or with a different arrangement of rhymes—

In his chamber, weak and dying,  
Was the Norman baron lying;  
Loud, without, the tempest thunder'd,  
    And the castle turret shook.  
In this fight was death the gainer,  
'Spite of vassal and retainer,  
And the lands his sires had plunder'd  
    Written in the Doomsday Book.—ID.

Or defective Tetrameters throughout—

Other Romans shall arise,  
    Heedless of a soldier's name;  
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,  
    Harmony the path to fame.—COWPER.

This measure predominates in Milton's "L'Allegro." Tennyson also employs it, as in "The Lady of Shalott," which is irregular in the general character of its verse. The refrain in every stanza is a regular Trimeter, and there is only one stanza in the whole poem in which the other verses are irregular throughout:

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
    Flowing down to Camelot.

Four gray walls and four gray towers  
 Overlook a space of flowers,  
 And the silent isle embowers  
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in the latter part of the next stanza, he breaks into the regular measure :

But who hath seen her wave her hand ?  
 Or at the casement seen her stand ?  
 Or is she known in all the land,  
 The Lady of Shalott ?

Irregular verse is generally rhymed : but Longfellow has written a long Indian epic poem, "Hiawatha," in unrhymed irregular Tetrameters ; *e.g.* :

There the little Hiawatha  
 Learned of every bird its language,  
 Learned their names and all their secrets,  
 How they built their nests in summer,  
 Where they hid themselves in winter,  
 Talked with them where'er he met them,  
 Called them "Hiawatha's chickens."  
 Of all beasts he learned the language,  
 Learned their names and all their secrets,  
 How the beavers built their lodges,  
 Where the squirrels hid their acorns,  
 How the reindeer ran so swiftly,  
 Why the rabbit was so timid,  
 Talked with them where'er he met them,  
 Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

**Heroic Measure** (Pentameter) is made up of five iambic feet. In its rhymed form it is the measure of Chaucer and Spenser, of Dryden and Pope, of Cowper, Campbell, and Byron ; as,

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance  
 As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.  
 'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence ;  
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense.  
 Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,  
 And the smooth strain in smoother numbers flows :  
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
 The hoarse, rough voice should like the torrent roar.—POPE.

In its unrhymed form it is the stately and solemn blank



verse of Shakspeare and Milton, as of Wordsworth and Tennyson; as,

Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray  
Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,  
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,  
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;  
She all night long her amorous descant sung.—MILTON.

**The Elegiac Stanza** is made up of four iambic pentameters rhyming alternately; as,

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flow'r is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.—GRAY.

**The Spenserian Stanza** is made up of eight iambic pentameters, followed by an iambic hexameter (or Alexandrine) first used by Spenser, and a favorite form with Thomson and Byron. The nine lines contain only three rhymes disposed thus, b, c, b, c c, d, c, d, d; *e.g.*:

It fortunéd, out of the thickest wood  
A ramping lion rushéd suddenly,  
Hunting full greedy after salvage blood;  
Soon as the royal virgin he did spy,  
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,  
To have at once devour'd her tender cor'se;  
But to the prey whenas he drew more nigh,  
His bloody rage assuagéd with remorse,  
And with the sight amazed, forgot his furious force.—SPENSER.

**The Sonnet** contains fourteen iambic pentameters. Great license is allowed in the order of the rhymes. Thus:

Surrey uses only two rhymes; making the sonnet seven couplets.

Spenser uses five rhymes; the first nine lines being a Spenserian stanza, and the last five corresponding with the last five of the same stanza.

Shakspeare uses seven rhymes, making his sonnet equal to three elegiac stanzas and a couplet; as,

bc bc | de de | fg fg | hh

Wordsworth uses three rhymes, of which one runs throughout the whole sonnet thus :

Weak is the will of man, his judgment blind,  
Remembrance persecutes, and hope betrays ;  
Heavy is woe, and joy, for humankind  
A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze !  
Thus might he paint our lot of mortal days,  
Who wants the glorious faculty assigned  
To elevate the more than reasoning mind,  
And color life's dark cloud with orient rays.  
Imagination is that sacred power,  
Imagination lofty and refined ;  
'Tis her's to pluck the amaranthine flower  
Of faith, and round the sufferer's temple bind  
Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest shower,  
And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.—WORDSWORTH.

**Romantic Measure** is made up of iambic tetrameters, rhymed, and either in couplets, or varied by trimeters ; as,

He was a man of middle age ;  
In aspect manly, grave and sage,  
As on king's errand come ;  
But in the glances of his eye,  
A penetrating, keen, and sly  
Expression found its home.—SCOTT.

**The Tennysonian Stanza** is made up of four iambic tetrameters, with two rhyming verses used between two others, best known in the poem "In Memoriam." Thus :

I hold it truth with him who sings  
To one clear harp in diverse tones,  
That men may rise on stepping-stones  
Of their dead selves to higher things.

**Iambic Trimeters** are seldom used by themselves, though they are found in Shakspeare's lyrics. Thus :

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude ;  
Thy tooth is not so keen  
Because thou art not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude.—*As You Like It.*

**Ballads and Hymns** are composed mainly of tetrameters and trimeters alternating.

The other forms in which iambic measure occurs, are either varieties of those already explained, or parts or multiples of them. The long verses of seven and eight feet may generally be written as two verses of four and three, and of four and four feet respectively. Thus the first line of the "Battle of Ivry," which is generally printed as one Heptameter, may be printed as a Tetrameter and a Trimeter :

Now glory to the Lord of Hoets,  
From whom all glories are!—MACAULAY.

**Anapæstic Measure** is rarely found pure, even in single lines.

For example, in Beattie's "Hermit," out of forty-eight lines, only four are pure complex verses ; all the others have a simple foot at the commencement ; *e.g.*:

At the close	of the day	when the ham	-let is still,
And mor	-tals the sweets	of forget	-fulness prove,
When nought	but the tor	-rent is heard	on the hill,
And nought	but the night	-ingale's song	in the grove.—BEATTIE.

Sometimes, however, a line thus *defective* at the beginning, is counterbalanced by an *excessive* syllable in the preceding line, thus :

'Tis the last | rose of sum | -mer,  
Left bloom | -ing alone. | —MOORE.

in which case the lines printed as one verse would be pure ; as,

'Tis the last | rose of sum | -mer, left bloom | -ing alone.

The commonest forms of this complex measure are the Trimeter ; as,

I am monarch of all I survey,  
My right there is none to dispute :  
From the centre all round to the sea,  
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.—COWPER.

and the Tetrameter ; as,

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail  
 And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;  
 And the might of the Gentile, unsuote by the sword,  
 Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.—BYRON.

**EXERCISE.**—Arrange each of the following sentences into a Heroic couplet :

This man would soar to heaven by his own strength, and would not be obliged for more to God.

How art thou misled, vain, wretched creature, to think thy wit bred these God-like notions.

She made a little stand at every turn, and thrust her lily hand among the thorns to draw the rose, and she shook the stalk, every rose she drew, and brush'd the dew away. (Four lines.)

Whoever thinks to see a faultless piece, thinks what never shall be, nor ever was, nor is.

Sometimes men of wit, as men of breeding, must commit less errors, to avoid the great.

The hungry judges soon sign the sentence, and that jurymen may dine, wretches hang.

Arrange each of the following into Iambic Tetrameters, rhyming :

He soon stood on the steep hill's verge, that looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood ; and martial murmurs proclaimed from below the southern foe approaching. (Four lines.)

Of mild mood was the Earl, and gentle ; the vassals were rude, and warlike, and fierce ; haughty of word, and of heart high, they recked little of a tame liege lord. (Four lines.)

A lion, worn with cares, tired with state affairs, and quite sick of pomp, resolved to pass his latter life in peace, remote from strife and noise. (Four lines.)

I felt as, when all the waves that o'er thee dash, on a plank at sea, whelm and upheave at the same time, and towards a desert realm hurl thee. (Four lines.)

No more, sweet Teviot, blaze the glaring bale-fires on thy silver tide ; steel-clad warriors ride along thy wild and willowed shore no longer. (Four lines, rhyming alternately.)

His eyes of swarthy glow he rolls fierce on the hunter's quiver'd

... than never to have loved at a  
(Tennysonian Stanza.)

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## GENERAL GLOSSARY.

- Ab-bré'vi-ate, v. t.** To shorten; to abridge; to contract.  
**Ab-bre'vi-á'tion, n.** Act of shortening; contraction.  
**Ab-nór'mal, a.** [Lat. *ab*, from, and *norma*, a rule.] Not conformed to rule; irregular.  
**Ab'so-lúte, a.** Not limited; unconditional; complete; arbitrary; despotic; positive; peremptory.  
**Ab'stráct, a.** Separate; existing in the mind only; abstruse; difficult.—*n.* An abridgment or epitome.  
**Ac-cent, n.** Modulation of voice; superior stress of voice on a syllable; a mark to regulate pronunciation, distinguish magnitudes, etc.  
**Ac-cess'i-ble, a.** Capable of being approached.  
**Ac-córd'ançe, n.** Agreement; harmony; conformity.  
**Ac-cú'mu-láte, v. t.** To heap together.—*v. i.* To increase; to be augmented.  
**Ac-cú'mu-lá'tion, n.** Act of accumulating; a heap.  
**Ac'cu-ra-cy, n.** Exactness; correctness; closeness.  
**Ac'cu-rate, a.** Done with care; without error.—*SYN.* Correct; precise; just.  
**A-ççer'bi-ty, n.** Bitterness of taste or of spirit.  
**Ad'ap-tá'tion, n.** The act of adapting or fitting; suitableness; fitness.  
**Ad'e-quate, a.** Fully sufficient; equal; proportionate; correspondent.  
**Ad'junct, n.** Something joined to another.—*n.* Added to, or united with.  
**Ad'u-lá'tion, n.** Excessive or servile flattery.  
**Affirm'a-tive, a.** Affirming; declaratory; confirmative.—*n.* That which contains an affirmation.
- Ag'gre-gáte, v. t.** To collect.  
**Ag-griève', v. t.** To afflict; to oppress or injure; to harass.  
**Al-loy', n.** A compound of two or more metals; a baser metal mixed with a fine.—*v. t.* To debase by mixing.  
**Al-lý', n.** [Lat. *ad*, to, and *ligare*, to bind.] One united to another by treaty, or by any tie; a confederate.—*v. t.* To unite by compact.  
**Al'ter-cá'tion, n.** Warm contention in words; controversy; wrangle; dispute.  
**Al'ter-ná'tion, n.** Act of alternating; reciprocal succession.  
**Am'bi-gú'i-ty, n.** Doubtfulness of meaning.  
**Am-big'u-ous, a.** Of uncertain meaning; doubtful; equivocal.  
**A-ná'l'o-gy, n.** Agreement between things, which are in most respects entirely unlike; proportion.  
**A-ná'l'y-sis, n.** (*pl.* *A-ná'l'y-ses*.) Resolution of any thing into its constituent elements.  
**An'a-lýze, v. t.** To resolve into first principles or elements.  
**An-nát'o-mize, n.** To divide into the constituent parts, for the purpose of examining each by itself.  
**An'ec-dóte, n.** A short story or incident.  
**An'nals, n. pl.** A chronological history; chronicles.  
**An-tá'g'o-nist, n.** An opponent; a competitor; a contender.—*a.* Counteracting; opposing.  
**An'te-céd'ent, n.** That which goes before.—*a.* Going before in time.—*SYN.* Prior; preceding; previous; anterior; foregoing.  
**An-tíc'i-páte, v. t.** To take or do before; to foretaste.



- An-tith'e-als, *n.* (*pl.* An-tith'e-sēs). Opposition of words or sentiments; contrast.
- Ap'a-thy, *n.* Want of feeling; insensibility.
- A-pós'tro-phe, *n.* [Gr. *apo*, from, and *strophē*, a turning.] A turning from real auditors to an imagined one; contraction of a word, or the mark [''] used to denote such contraction.
- Ap'pel-lá'tion, *n.* A name by which a thing is called.—*SYN.* Title; address; style.
- Ap-prē'ci-á'te (-áhi-), *v. t.* To value; to raise the value of.—*v. i.* To rise in value.
- Ap-prē'ci-á'tion (-áhi-á'shun), *n.* Act of appreciating or valuing; a just estimate.
- Ap-pre'hend', *v. t.* To seize; to conceive by the mind; to fear.
- Ap-pre'hén'sion, *n.* Act of apprehending; conception of ideas; fear; distrust.
- Ap-pre'hén'sive, *a.* Quick to apprehend; fearful.
- Ap-prō'pri-á'te, *a.* Belonging peculiarly.—*SYN.* Fit; adapted; pertinent; suitable; proper.
- Ap-prōx'i-má'te, *v. t.* To bring near; to cause to approach.—*v. i.* To draw near; to approach.
- Ap-prōx'i-má'te, *a.* Near; nigh.
- Ap-prōx'i-má'tion, *n.* Approach.
- Ar'bi-tra-ry, *a.* Dictated by, or depending on, will; bound by no law; absolute in power.—*SYN.* Tyrannical; imperious; unlimited; absolute; despotic.
- Ár-gu-ment, *n.* Reason alleged to induce belief; plea.
- Ar-ránge'ment, *n.* Act of arranging; adjustment.
- Ár'ti-san, *n.* A mechanic.
- Ár'tist, *n.* A professor and practiser of one of the fine arts.
- As'pēct, *n.* Look; air; countenance; appearance.
- As-sert', *v. t.* To affirm.
- As-sō'ci-á'te (-áhi-át), *v. t.* To join in company; to unite with.—*v. i.* To unite in company or action.—*a.* Joined in interest; united.
- As-sūme, *v. t.* [Lat. *ad*, to, and *sumere*, to take.] To take; to take for granted; to pretend to possess.—*v. i.* To be arrogant.
- At-trib'ute, *v. t.* To ascribe; to impute.
- At'tri-bū'te, *n.* An inherent quality.
- Au'di-ble, *a.* Capable of being heard.
- Au'thor-ize, *v. t.* To give authority to; to make legal; to justify.
- Aux-Il'i-a-ry, *a.* Helping; assisting.—*n.* A verb that helps to form the moods and tenses of other verbs.
- Awk'ward-ness, *n.* Ungracefulness; clumsiness.
- Ax'i-om, *n.* A self-evident proposition or truth.—*SYN.* Maxim; adage.
- Ax'i-om-á'tic, *a.* Pertaining to axioms; of the nature of an axiom.
- Bád'i-náge (bád'i-násh), *n.* Light or playful discourse.
- Bán'ter, *v. t.* To rally; to ridicule; to joke or jest with.—*n.* Raillery; joke.
- Bom'bast (bóm'bást), *n.* High sounding language; fustian.
- Brev'i-ty, *n.* Conciseness.
- Cá'dence, *n.* A fall of the voice in reading or speaking; modulation.
- Ca-jó'le, *v. t.* To deceive by flattery; to wheedle.
- Cál'um-ny, *n.* False and malicious accusation.—*SYN.* Slander; defamation; libel; abuse.
- Cár'i-ca-tū're, *n.* A representation exaggerated to deformity; a ludicrous likeness.—*v. t.* To represent ludicrously.
- Cát'e-go-ry, *n.* One of the highest classes to which the objects of knowledge or thought can be reduced; predicament; state; condition.
- Caution, *n.* Prudence; care; admonition; injunction; warning.—*v. t.* To advise against; to admonish.
- Cen-sū'ri-ous-ness, *n.* Quality of being censorious.
- Cha-grin', *n.* Ill-humor; vexation.—*v. t.* To vex; to mortify.
- Çir-cūm'fer-ence, *n.* The line that bounds the circle.
- Çir-cūm-lo-cū'tion, *n.* The use of indirect expressions.
- Çir-cūm-scribe', *v. t.* To inclose; to limit; to confine.
- Cite, *v. t.* To summon; to quote.
- Clás'si-fi-cá'tion, *n.* Act of arranging, or state of being arranged, in classes.
- Clause, *n.* Part of a sentence.
- Clér'ic-al, *a.* Pertaining to the clergy.

- Clí'max**, *n.* [Gr. *klímax*, a ladder.] Gradation of ascent in a sentence.
- Col-léct'ive**, *a.* Formed by gathering; inferring; comprehending many.
- Cól'lo-cá'tion**, *n.* Act of placing; arrangement.
- Col-ló'qui-al**, *a.* Pertaining to, or used in, conversation.
- Cóm'bi-ná'tion**, *n.* Union or association.—**SYN.** Coalition; conjunction; conspiracy.
- Cóm'men-dá'tion**, *n.* Praise; approbation.
- Com-pár'a-tíve**, *a.* Estimated by comparison; not positive.
- Com-pár'i-son**, *n.* Act of comparing; comparative estimate; simile.
- Com-pile**, *v. t.* To compose out of materials got from other works.
- Cóm'plai-sánce**, *n.* Civility; courtesy; urbanity; politeness.
- Cóm'ple-mént**, *n.* That which completes something else; the full number.
- Cóm'plex**, *a.* Of many parts; intricate; complicated.
- Com-plex'i-ty**, *n.* A complex state; intricacy.
- Com'pli-cate**, *v. t.* To make complex or intricate.—**SYN.** To entangle; infold; involve; perplex.
- Cóm'pli-ment**, *n.* Act or expression of civility; praise.—*v. t.* To flatter or gratify by bestowing praise upon.
- Com-pórt**, *v. i.* To agree; to suit.—*v. t.* To behave; to conduct.
- Com-pó'síte**, *a.* Made up of parts; compounded.
- Cóm'po-sí'tion** (-zish'un), *n.* Mixture; combination; arrangement or setting of type; a written work.
- Com-pound**, *v. t.* [Lat. *con*, with, together, and *ponere*, to set, place.] To mix in one mass; to combine or unite; to adjust.—*v. i.* To come to terms of agreement.
- Cóm'pre-hén'sive**, *a.* Including much in small space.—**SYN.** Large; full; capacious.
- Com-prés'sion**, *n.* Act of pressing together.
- Con-céde**, *v. t.* To grant; to admit as true or proper.
- Con-céit**, *n.* Fancy; vanity; pride of opinion.
- Con-céive**, *v. t.* To form in the mind; to imagine.
- Con-cén'ter**, } *v. i.* or *t.* To come or  
Con-cén'tre, } bring to a point.
- Cón'cén-trá'te**, or **Con-cén'trá'te**, *v. t.* To bring to a common centre, or to a closer union.
- Cón'cén-trá'tion**, *n.* Act of concentrating.
- Con-cíl'i-á'te**, *v. t.* To gain by favor; to win over.—**SYN.** To propitiate; to engage.
- Con-cise'ness**, *n.* Brevity in speaking or writing.
- Con-cóm'i-tá't**, *a.* Accompanying.—*n.* A companion; accompaniment.
- Con-dense**, *v. t.* To compress into a smaller compass; to crowd.
- Cón'de-scén'sion**, *n.* Act of condescending; affability.
- Con-dó'lénçe**, *n.* Expression of grief or sympathy.
- Con-dúce**, *v. i.* To tend; to contribute.
- Con-fúte**, *v. t.* To disprove; to prove to be false.
- Con-grát'u-lá'te**, *v. t.* To wish joy to.—**SYN.** To felicitate.
- Cón-grát'u-lá'tion**, *n.* Act of congratulating; felicitation.
- Con-jéct'úre**, *n.* Opinion based on imperfect knowledge; surmise; guess.—*v. t.* [Lat. *con*, with, together, and *jacere*, *jectus*, to throw.] To guess; to suspect; to surmise.
- Con-júnc'tion**, *n.* Union; connection; a connecting word.
- Cón'scious-ness**, *n.* Perception of what passes in one's own mind.
- Cón'so-ná't**, *a.* Agreeable; consistent; accordant.—*n.* A sound less open than a vowel; a letter representing such sound.
- Con-strúct'ion**, *n.* Act or form of constructing; thing constructed; structure; fabrication; edifice; interpretation.
- Cón'strúe**, *v. t.* To translate, interpret, or explain.
- Cón'tem-plá'tion**, *n.* Meditation; study, as opposed to action.
- Cón'text**, *n.* [Lat. *con*, with, together, and *textus*, knit.] Parts of a discourse that precede and follow a sentence quoted.
- Con-tráct'ion**, *n.* The shortening of a word, by the omission of a letter or syllable.
- Con-trást**, *v. t.* or *i.* To place or stand in opposition.

- Con-vén'tion-al, *a.* Agreed on; stipulated; sanctioned by usage.
- Con-vérge', *v. t.* To tend toward one point.
- Côn'ver-sá'tion, *n.* Familiar discourse; behavior.
- Con-vért', *v. t.* To change to another form or state.
- Con-vic'tion, *n.* A proving guilty; state of being convinced; sense of guilt; confutation.
- Con-vinçe', *v. t.* To satisfy by evidence.—*SYN.* To persuade.
- Co-ór'di-nate, *a.* Holding the same rank or degree.
- Cop'u-la, *n.* The word which unites the subject and predicate of a proposition.
- Cóp'y-right (-rít), *n.* The sole right of an author to publish a book, etc.—*v. t.* To secure by copyright, as a book.
- Cor-réla-tive, *a.* Having mutual relation.—*n.* One who, or that which, stands in a reciprocal relation to some other person or thing.
- Cóurt'e sy (kúrt'e-sy), *n.* [From *court*.] Politeness; civility.
- Cre-dú'li-ty, *n.* Easiness of belief; readiness to believe.
- Cri-té'ri-on, *n.* (*pl.* Cri-té'ri-a.) A standard of judging.
- Crit'i-cise, *v. t.* To judge and remark upon with exactness.—*v. i.* To act as a critic.
- Crit'i-cism, *n.* Art or act of criticizing; critical examination or remark.
- Cy'clo-pæ'di-a, or Cy'clo-pé'di-a, *n.* A body or circle of sciences; a dictionary of arts and sciences.
- De-dúc'tion, *n.* An abatement; that which is deducted; an inference.
- Dé'fer-ence, *n.* Respect or concession to another.
- De-fine', *v. t.* To end; to mark the limits of; to explain; to interpret.
- Dé'fi-nite, *a.* Having precise limits; certain; exact.
- Dé't'i-ní'tion (-nísh'un), *n.* Description of a thing by its properties; explanation of the meaning of a word.
- De-liv'er-v, *n.* Release; surrender; style of utterance.
- Dém'on-strate, or De-món'-strate, *v. t.* To prove fully or to a certainty.—*SYN.* To evince; manifest.
- Dém'on-strá'tiou, *n.* Proof to a certainty.
- De-món'-stra-tive, *a.* Tending to demonstrate; conclusive.
- De-pénd'ent, *a.* Relying; subordinate.—*n.* One subordinate to another.
- Dér'i-vá'tion, *n.* Deduction from a source; act of tracing origin or descent, as of words.
- De-rôg'a-to-ry, *a.* Detracting.
- De-scrip'tion, *n.* Act of describing; account; class.
- De-scrip'tive, *a.* Containing description.
- Dé'tail, or De-táil', *n.* A minute account or portion; a particular.
- De-táil', *v. t.* To narrate in particulars; to particularize; to appoint for a particular service.
- De-tráct', *v. i.* [Lat. *de*, from, and *trahere*, tractum, to draw.] To depreciate worth.—*v. t.* To slander.
- De-tráct'ion, *n.* Slander; defamation.
- De-vél'op, *v. t.* To unfold; to uncover; to lay open to view.
- Dé'vi-áte, *v. i.* [Lat. *de*, from, and *viare*, to travel.] To wander; to go astray; to err.
- De-vise', *v. t.* To contrive; to plan; to invent; to give by will.—*v. i.* To lay a plan.
- Dêx'ter-ous, *a.* Expert in manual acts; skilful; adroit.
- Dêx'ter-ous ly, *adv.* With dexterity or skill.
- Dí'a-lôgue, *n.* A discourse between two or more.
- Dic'tion, *n.* Manner of expression; choice of words.
- Di-grê'ssion (-grêsh'un), *n.* A deviation.
- Di-lá'tion, or Dî-lá'tion, *n.* Act of dilating; expansion.
- Dis-cárd', *v. t.* To dismiss; to cast off.
- Dis-cèrn' (diz-zèrn'), *v. t. or i.* To see; to perceive and recognize; to judge.
- Dis-curse', *n.* Conversation; talk; sermon; treatise.—*v. t.* To converse; to talk.—*v. t.* To utter or give forth.
- Dis-creet', *a.* Prudent; cautious; sagacious.
- Dis-crè'tion (-krêsh'un), *n.* Pru-

- dence; sagacity; freedom to act at will.
- Dis-crim'i-nâte, *v. t.* To distinguish; to separate.
- Dis-crim'i-nâ'tion, *n.* Act of discriminating; mark of distinction.
- Dis-cuss', *v. t.* [Lat. *dis*, apart, and *quatero*, to shake, strike.] To disperse; to examine by discussion.—*SYN.* To debate.
- Dis-cus'sion (-kûsh'un), *n.* A debate; disquisition; disputation.
- Dis-junc'tion, *n.* Disunion; separation.
- Dis-junct'ive, *a.* Tending to disjoin.
- Dis-pär'age, *v. t.* To injure by depreciating comparisons.
- Dis-tinct', *a.* Separate; different; clear; not confused.
- DI-verse', *v. i.* To tend different ways from one point.
- Di'verse-ly, *adv.* In different ways or directions.
- Du'al, *a.* Expressing the number two.
- Du-plic'i-ty, *n.* [Lat. *duplicatus*, from *duplex*, double.] Doubleness of art or speech.—*SYN.* Dissimulation; deceit; guile.
- Ef-fect'ive, *a.* Able; active; efficient.
- Ef-fi-cien-cy (-fish'en-), *n.* Power of producing effect.
- E-go-tism, *n.* [Lat. *ego*, I.] Self-commendation; vanity.
- E-läb'o-râte, *v. t.* To produce with labor.
- E-läb'o-rate, *a.* Finished with great care.
- El'e-ment, *n.* The constituent part of a thing.
- El-im'i-nate, *v. t.* To cause to disappear from an equation; to set aside as unimportant; to leave out of consideration; to deduce; to infer.
- E-lis'ion (-lizh'un), *n.* The cutting off of a vowel at the end of a word.
- El-lip'sis, *n.* (*pl.* El-lip'ses.) In *grammar*, the omission of a word or phrase.
- E-lü'ci-dâte, *v. t.* To explain; to make clear.
- E-lü'ci-dä'tion, *n.* Explanation.
- Em-bell'ish, *v. t.* To make beautiful by adornment.
- E-mer'gen-cy, *n.* A rising out of a fluid; a sudden occasion; pressing necessity.
- Ĕm'i-nence, *n.* A rising ground; loftiness; distinction.
- Ĕm'pha-sis, *n.* (*pl.* Ĕm'pha-ses.) Force of voice given to particular words.
- Em-phät'ic, *a.* forcible; strong; uttered with emphasis.
- Em-pr'ic-al, *a.* Used and applied without science.
- Em-pr'i-cism, *n.* Quackery.
- Em'u-lä'tion, *n.* Rivalry; competition.
- Em-cüm'ber, *v. t.* To impede action by a load or burden.
- En-graft', *v. t.* To insert, as a scion in a stock.
- E-nör'mi-ty, *n.* Atrociousness; depravity.
- Ĕn'ter-tain', *v. t.* To treat with hospitality; to amuse.
- En-thü'si-äst, *n.* One whose imagination is heated.
- En'thy-meme, *n.* An argument consisting of only two propositions.
- E-nü'mer-äte, *v. t.* To number; to reckon up singly.
- E-nün'ci-äte (-nün'shi-). *v. t.* To declare; to utter.
- Ĕp'i-gram, *n.* A short and pointed poem.
- Ep'i-thët, *n.* An adjective expressing some especial appropriate quality or attribute.
- E-quiv'a-lent, *a.* Equal in value, power, or effect.—*n.* That which is equal in value or worth.
- E-quiv'o-cal, *a.* Ambiguous; doubtful.
- Ĕs'say, *n.* A trial; attempt; a short, informal treatise.
- Es-sen'tial, *a.* Necessary to existence; very important.—*n.* Constituent principle.
- Ĕt'y-möl'o-gy, *n.* Derivation of words from their originals.
- Eü'pho-ny, *n.* An agreeable sound or combination of sounds.
- E-völve', *v. t.* To unfold; to expand; to emit.
- Ex-act'i-tude, *n.* Exactness.
- Ex-act'ness, *n.* Accuracy; nicety.
- Ex-ag'ger-ä'tion, *n.* A representation beyond the truth.
- Ex-cës'sive, *a.* Exceeding just limits; extreme.
- Ex-clüde', *v. t.* To shut out; to debar; to except.

- Ex-clu'sion**, *n.* Act of excluding; rejection.  
**Ex-orés'cent**, *a.* Growing out of something else; in a preternatural manner; superfluous.  
**Ex-pán'sion**, *n.* Act of expanding; dilatation; extent.  
**Ex-pó'nent**, *n.* Index of a power in algebra; a representative.  
**Ex-po-sít'ion** (-s'iah'un), *n.* Explanation; interpretation; an exhibition of arts, etc.  
**Ex-tém'po-rá'ne-ous**, *a.* Uttered without previous study; unpremeditated.  
**Ex-tén'sive-ly**, *adv.* Widely; largely.  
**Ex-trá'va-gançe**, *n.* State of being extravagant; excess; prodigality.
- Fa-oc'tious**, *a.* Humorous; witty.  
**Fac-ti'tious** (-t'iah'us), *a.* Made by art; artificial.  
**Fál'la-cy**, *n.* Deceitfulness; deception; sophistry.  
**Fa-mil-iár'i-ty**, *n.* Intimate acquaintance; ease in intercourse.  
**Fe-li'ci-tous**, *a.* Happy; delightful; very appropriate.  
**Fe-líc'i-ty**, *n.* Great happiness.—**SYN.** Bliss; blissfulness; blessedness.  
**Flát'ter-y**, *n.* Act of flattering; praise, especially false praise; adulation.  
**För'eign** (fór'in), *a.* Belonging to another country; not to the purpose.—**SYN.** Alien; remote; extrinsic.  
**Fórm'u-la**, *n.* Prescribed form.  
**Fún'ct-ion**, *n.* Office; employment.  
**Fun'da-mént'al**, *a.* Pertaining to the foundation; essential.  
**Fú'tile**, *a.* Useless; vain; worthless; ineffectual.
- Gén'er-ál'i-ty**, *n.* State of being general; the greatest part.  
**Gén'er-al-i-sá'tion**, *n.* Act of generalizing.  
**Gén'er-al-ize**, *v. t.* To arrange under general heads.  
**Gén'er-áte**, *v. t.* To produce; to cause.  
**Gro-tés'que** (-t'èsk'), *a.* Wildly formed; odd; whimsical.  
**Guá'r'an-tee**, *v. t.* To warrant.—*n.* A surety for performance.
- Hár-mo-ny**, *n.* [Gr. *harmonia*, from *harmonizein*, to fit together.] Agreement; concord of musical strains that differ in pitch and quality.  
**Hét'e-ro-gé'ne-ous**, *a.* Of a different nature.  
**Hón'or-a-ry** (ón'ur-), *a.* Conferring honor.  
**Hú'mor** (or yú'mur), *n.* Temper; disposition; a delicate kind of wit; pleasantry.  
**Hú'mor-ous** (or yu'mur-), *a.* Exhibiting humor; jocular; waggish; pleasant; playful.  
**Hy'gi-ene**, *n.* Science of the preservation of health.  
**Hy-pó'c'ri-sy**, *n.* Dissimulation; insincerity.  
**Hy-póth'e-sis**, or **Hy-póth'e-s'is** (*pl.* Hy-póth'e-ses, hí- or hí-), *n.* Supposition; proposition assumed.
- Í-dé'al**, *a.* Existing in idea or in fancy.—**SYN.** Visionary; fanciful; imaginary; unreal.—*n.* The conception of a thing in its most perfect state.  
**Íd'i-om**, *n.* An expression peculiar to a language.  
**Il-lús'trate**, *v. t.* To explain; to make clear; to elucidate.  
**Íllus-trá'tion**, *n.* Explanation; elucidation.  
**Im-be-cile**, *a.* Weak in mind or body.  
**Im-pár'tial**, *a.* Free from bias.—**SYN.** Unprejudiced; just; equitable.  
**Im-péde**, *v. t.* To hinder; to obstruct; to retard.  
**Im-pél'**, *v. t.* To urge forward.  
**Im-pér'son-al**, *a.* Not varied according to the persons.  
**Im-prés'sive**, *a.* Producing effect; susceptible.  
**In-éc'cu-rate**, *a.* Erroneous.  
**In-éd'e-quate**, *a.* Not equal to the purpose.—**SYN.** Unequal; incompetent; insufficient; defective.  
**In'a-nít'ion** (-nish'un), *n.* Emptiness; exhaustion from lack of food.  
**Ín'ap-pró'pri-ate**, *a.* Unbecoming; unsuitable; unfit.  
**In'ci-dent**, *a.* Falling on; casual; liable to happen.—*n.* That which happens.  
**In'ci-dént'al**, *a.* Happening occasionally.  
**In-clúde**, *v. t.* To comprehend; to comprise.

- In-con-gru-ity, *n.* Unsuitableness; inconsistency.
- In-côn'gru-ôds, *a.* Not consistent.—*SYN.* Unfit; inappropriate; unsuitable.
- Ïn-dêf'i-nîte, *a.* Not precise.
- In-dêl'i-ca-çy, *n.* Want of delicacy.
- In-dêl'i-cate, *a.* Offensive to purity; indecent.
- In-dis-pên'sa-ble, *a.* Not to be dispensed with; absolutely necessary.
- In-dôrse'ment, *n.* A writing of one's name on the back of a note; sanction; approval.
- In-dûce', *v. t.* To lead by persuasion.
- In-dûce'ment, *n.* Anything which induces.
- In-er'ti-a (-er'sh'la), *n.* That property of matter by which it tends when at rest to remain so, and when in motion to continue in motion.
- In-êv'i-ta-ble, *a.* Not to be avoided; unavoidable.
- In-fer-ence, *n.* Deduction from premises; consequence.
- In-fôr'm'al, *u.* Wanting form; without ceremony; irregular.
- Ïn'ge-nû'i-ty, *n.* Ready invention; skill.
- Ïn-sert', *v. t.* To bring into or among; to introduce.
- In-ser'tion, *n.* Act of inserting; thing inserted.
- In-sin'u-a-ting, *ppr.* Creeping or winding in; insensibly winning favor and confidence.
- In-stinct, *n.* Unconscious, involuntary, or unreasoning prompting to action.—*a.* Moved from within; actuated.
- In-tân'gi-ble, *a.* Not perceptible by touch.
- In-tel-lect'u-al, *a.* Relating to the understanding; mental.
- In-têl'i-gent, *a.* Knowing; instructed; skilful.
- In-têl'i-gent-ly, *adv.* In an intelligent manner.
- In-ter-côurse, *n.* Mutual dealings; fellowship.
- Ïn-ter-lin'e-a'tion, *n.* A writing or printing between lines.
- Ïn-ter-pên'e-trâte, *v. t.* To penetrate between other substances.
- Ïn-ter-po-lâ'tion, *n.* The act of foisting a word or passage into a manuscript or book.
- In-ter-pret-a'tion, *n.* Explanation; exposition; version.
- Ïn-ter-rôg'a-tive, *a.* Denoting a question.—*n.* A word that indicates a question.
- Ïn-ter-rûption, *n.* Interposition; stop; hindrance.
- In-ter-spere', *v. t.* To scatter among or here and there.
- In-ter-ven'tion, *n.* Act of intervening; interposition.
- In-tri-cate, *a.* Entangled or involved; complicated.
- In-trin'sic, *a.* Internal; true; real; inherent; essential.
- Ïn-tro-dûction, *a.* Act of introducing; a preface.
- In-vêr'sion, *n.* A complete change of order or place.
- In-vês-ti-gâ'tion, *n.* A searching for truth; examination; inquiry.
- Ïron-y, *n.* Speech intended to convey a contrary signification; a species of ridicule.
- Ïr-re-sist'i-ble, *a.* Impossible to be resisted with success.
- Ir-rêv'er-ence, *n.* Want of reverence or veneration.
- Ju-d'i'cious (-dish'us), *a.* Prudent; acting with judgment.
- Lê'gend, or Lêg'end, *n.* A remarkable story; inscription; motto.
- Le-git'i-mate, *a.* Lawful; genuine.
- Li-a-bil'i-ty, *n.* A state of being liable; responsibility; tendency.
- Li'bel, *n.* A defamatory writing; a written statement of the cause of a legal action and of the relief sought.—*v. t.* To defame by writing; to proceed against by filing a libel.
- Li'cense, *n.* Permission; excess of liberty.—*v. t.* To permit by legal warrant; to authorize.
- Lim'it, *n.* A bound; border.—*v. t.* To set bounds to; to confine within certain bounds.
- Lit'er-a-ry, *a.* Relating to literature.
- Lit'er-a-tûre, *n.* Acquaintance with books; literary productions.—*SYN.* Learning; erudition.
- Lôg'ic, *n.* Science and art of reasoning.
- Lû'di-croûs, *a.* Exciting laughter.—*SYN.* Laughable; ridiculous.

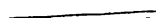
- Ma-lig'nant**, *a.* Malicious; dangerous to life.
- Man'i-fest-ā'tion**, *n.* Exhibition; display; revelation.
- Māx'i-mum**, *n.* (*pl.* Māx'i-ma). The greatest quantity or value attainable in a given case.
- Mis-āp'pre-nēn'sion**, *n.* A mistake.
- Mōd'er-ate**, *a.* Not violent or excessive; temperate; sober.
- Mōd'er-ā'tion**, *n.* State of being moderate.
- Mōd'i-fier**, *n.* He who, or that which, modifies.
- Mōd'i-fy**, *v. t.* To change the form of; to qualify; to vary.
- Mōn'o-lōgue**, *n.* A speech by one person.
- Mo-nōp'o-lize**, *v. t.* To engross the whole of.
- Mōr'bid**, *a.* [Lat. *morbidus*, from *morbus*, disease.] Not sound or healthy.—**SYN.** Diseased; sickly; sick.
- Mūt'u-al**, *a.* Reciprocal; acting in return.
- Myth**, *n.* A religious fable; a fiction.
- My-thō'lō-gy**, *n.* A system of fabulous doctrines respecting heathen deities.
- Nar-rā'tion**, *a.* Relation; rehearsal; recital; account.
- Nēg'li-gent-ly**, *adv.* Heedlessly; carelessly.
- Ob-jēct'ive**, *a.* Relating to the object; outward; external.
- Ob-scūre**, *a.* Dark; gloomy; not easily understood; not much known.—*v. t.* To darken; to make less clear or beautiful.
- Ob-serve**, *v. t.* To see; to notice; to utter, as a remark.
- Ōb'so-lēte**, *a.* Disused; out of date.
- Ob-trude**, *v. t.* To thrust in or upon; to urge upon against the will.
- Ōb'vi-ōus**, *a.* Evident; clear.
- Ōp'in'ion**, *n.* Judgment formed by the mind; notion; sentiment; persuasion.
- Op-pō'nent**, *a.* Opposing; antagonistic.—*n.* An opposer; an antagonist.
- Ō-rā'tion**, *n.* A public and elaborate discourse.
- Ōr'nate**, *a.* Adorned; decorated; beautiful.
- Ōr'tho-e-py**, *n.* Correct pronunciation of words.
- Ōs'ten-ta-tious**, *a.* Affectedly showy; gaudy; pretentious.
- Pān'der**, *v. i.* To act as agent for the passions of others.
- Pār'a-ble**, *n.* A moral fable.
- Pār'a-dōx**, *n.* A tenet seemingly absurd, yet true.
- Pēd'ant-ry**, *n.* Ostentation of learning.
- Per-cep'tion**, *n.* Act or power of perceiving.—**SYN.** Idea; conception; sentiment; sensation; observation.
- Pēr-emp-to-ry**, *a.* Positive; absolute.
- Per'fect**, *a.* [Lat. *perfectus*, performed, finished.] Complete; finished; consummate.
- Per'fect**, or **Per-fēct'**, *v. t.* To finish; to complete.
- Per-fēc'tion**, *n.* State of being perfect; completeness.
- Per'ma-nent**, *a.* Durable; lasting.
- Per-mis'sion** (*mish'un*), *n.* Act of permitting; formal consent; leave; liberty.
- Pēr'o-rā'tion**, *n.* The closing part of an oration.
- Per'qui-site**, *n.* An extra allowance in money or other things.
- Per-spēct'ive**, *a.* Relating to vision.—*n.* Art of representing objects correctly on a plain surface.
- Per'api-cū'i-ty**, *n.* Clearness.
- Per-suāde'**, *v. t.* To influence by argument or entreaty.
- Per-suā'sion**, *n.* Act of persuading; creed; belief; opinion; reason.
- Per-vāde'**, *v. t.* [Lat. *pervadere*, fr. *per*, through, and *vadere*, to go.] To pass through.
- Phrāse**, *n.* A sentence; mode of speech; style; diction.—*v. t.* To name or style.
- Phrā'se-ō'lō-gy**, *n.* Manner of expression.
- Plā'cāte**, *v. t.* To appease or pacify.
- Plāu'si-ble**, *a.* Superficially pleasing; apparently right.—**SYN.** Specious.
- Po-lite'**, *a.* Polished; refined.
- Po-lite'ness**, *n.* Good breeding; courtesy.
- Pō's-si-bil'i-ty**, *n.* The power of being or doing; that which is possible.
- Prāc'ti-cal**, *a.* Relating to practice; capable of being turned to use.
- Pre-cēde'**, *v. t.* To go before.

- Pre-cis'ion, (-ish'un), *n.* Exactness; accuracy.
- Pre-lôm'î-nance, *n.* Ascendency; superiority.
- Prêfer-ençe, *n.* Estimation or choice above another.
- Pre-fix', *v. t.* To place before.
- Prêfix, *n.* A letter, syllable, or word prefixed.
- Prêj'u-dice, *n.* Prejudgment; unreasonable prepossession; bias; injury.—*v. t.* To bias unduly.
- Prêj'u-dîcial (-dîsh-al), *a.* Likely to injure; hurtful.
- Prêp'a-râ'tion, *n.* Act of preparing, or making ready; preparatory act.
- Prêsen-tâ'tion, *n.* Act of presenting; exhibition.
- Pre-sump'tion, *n.* Opinion; strong probability; excess of confidence.
- Pre-sump'tu-ous, *a.* Rash; bold; unduly confident.
- Pre-tên'sion, *n.* Claim, true or false; pretense.
- Pre-tên'tious, *a.* Making great pretensions.
- Pro-hib'it, *v. t.* To forbid.
- Pro-nûn'ci-â'tion (-shî-â'-shun), *n.* Act or mode of utterance.
- Pro-pôr'tion, *n.* Comparative relation; equal share.—*v. t.* To adjust in a suitable proportion, as one part to another.
- Pro-pri'e-ty, *n.* Fitness; justness; decorum.
- Pro-vin'cial, *n.* An inhabitant of a province.—*a.* Belonging to a province; unpolished.
- Pro-vin'cial-ism, *n.* Peculiarity of speech in a province.
- Prox-im'î-ty, *n.* Immediate nearness.
- Pûnct'u-â'tion, *n.* Act or art of dividing sentences by means of points.
- Pûn-ge-n-ey, *n.* Sharpness; keenness.
- Quaint, *a.* Artificially elegant; odd and antique.—*SYN.* Strange; whimsical; fanciful; singular; queer.
- Quaint'ness, *n.* State of being quaint; oddness.
- Qual'i-fi-câ'tion, *n.* That which qualifies; legal requisite; endowment; accomplishment; restriction; modification.
- Qual'i-fy, *v. t.* [Lat. *qualificare*, fr. *qualis*, such, and *facere*, to make.] To fit; to prepare; to modify; to limit; to abate; to restrict.
- Râ'di-us, *n.* (*pl.* Râ'di-i.) Half of the diameter of a circle.
- Râil'ler-y (râil'ler-y), *n.* Banter; good-humored pleasantry or slight satire.
- Rê'ca-pit'u-lâte, *v. t.* To repeat in a summary way.—*SYN.* To reiterate; recite; rehearse.
- Rêc'og-nî'tion (-nîsh'un), *n.* Act of recognizing; acknowledgment; avowal.
- Rêc'og-nize, *v. t.* To know again; to acknowledge.
- Rêc'om-mend-â'tion, *n.* Act of praising; that which commends to favor; commendation; act of advising.
- Rê'con-struct, *v. t.* To rebuild.
- Re-dûn'dance, *n.* Superfluous quantity; excess.
- Re-flec'tion, *n.* Act of reflecting; attentive consideration; censure; that which is produced by reflecting.
- Rê'flex, *a.* Directed backward; retroactive.
- Re-frain', *v. t. or i.* To abstain; to forbear.—*n.* Burden of a song.
- Re-fûte', *v. t.* To prove false.
- Re-jêc'tion, *n.* Act of rejecting.
- Re-lâ'tion, *n.* Act of relating; narrative of facts; any connection established.
- Rêl'a-tive, *a.* Having relation; respecting.—*n.* One connected by blood or affinity; that which relates to something else.
- Rê'lax-â'tion, *n.* A slackening; relief from laborious or painful duties.
- Rêp'e-tî'tion (-tîsh'un), *n.* Act of repeating; iteration.
- Re-prêss', *v. t.* To put down; to subdue; to crush.
- Rê'pro-dûc'tion, *n.* Act or process of producing anew; thing reproduced.
- Re-proof', *n.* Censure expressed; rebuke.
- Rêp'û-ta-ble, *a.* Of good repute; respectable.
- Rêp'û-tâ'tion, *n.* General estimation; good name; credit; honor derived from public esteem.
- Re-pûte', *v. t.* To hold in estimation; to think.—*n.* Reputation; estimation.
- Rêq'ui-sîte (rêk'wi-zit), *a.* Required; necessary.—*n.* That which is necessary.
- Rês-o-lû'tion, *n.* Fixed purpose; the

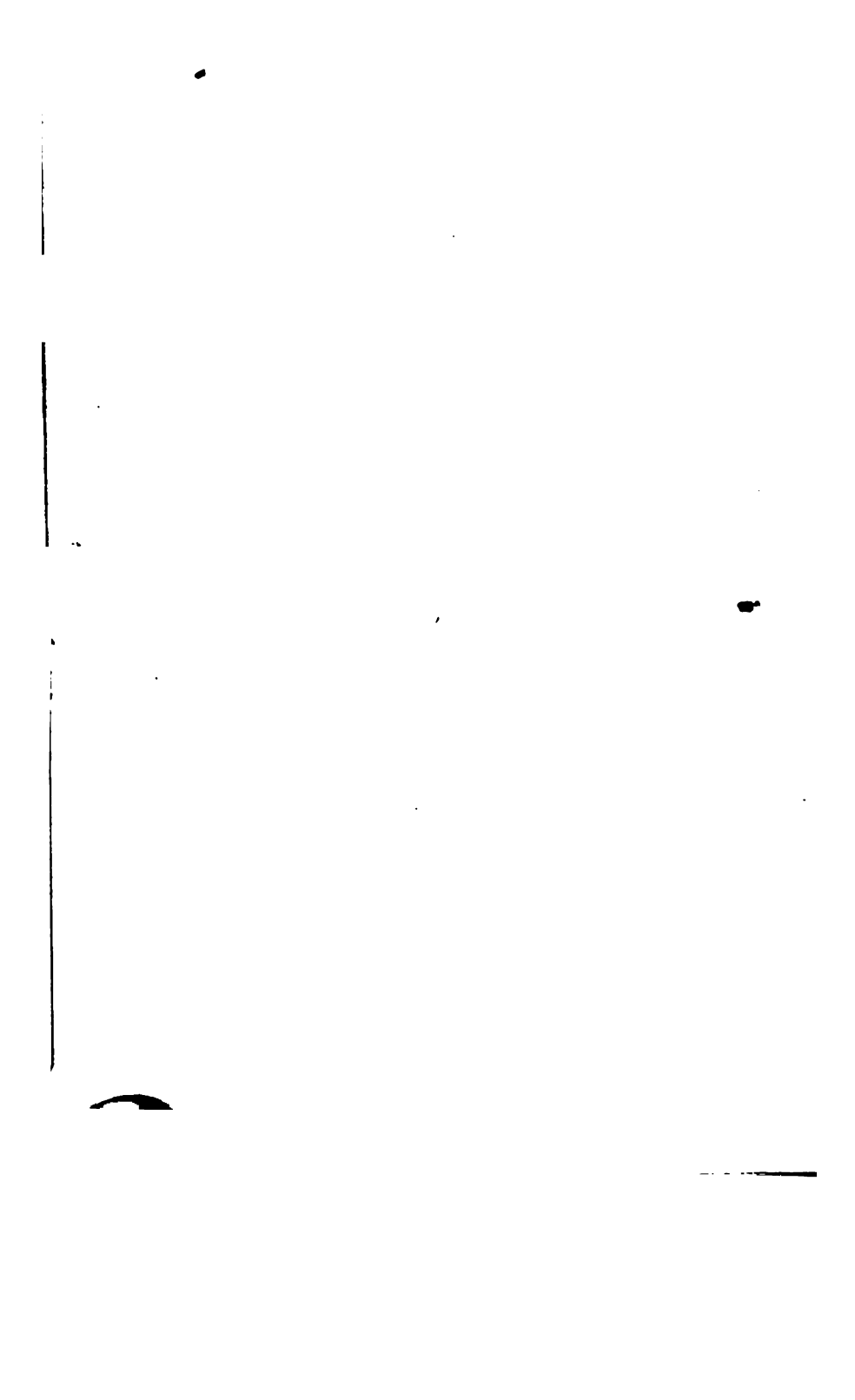


- set of separating parts of a complex idea.
- Re-spón'si-bíli-ty, *n.* Liability to answer or pay.
- Re-spón'si-ble, *a.* Liable to account.—*SYN.* Accountable; answerable.
- Re-strict', *v. t.* To limit; to restrain; to confine.
- Re-tén'tion, *n.* Act of retaining.
- Ret'i-cence, *n.* [Lat. *re* and *taceo*, to be silent.] Concealment by silence.
- Re-tórt', *n.* Censure returned; re-*partee*; a chemical vessel.—*v. t.* To throw back; to return; to make a sharp reply.
- Re-visit', *v. t.* To examine with care for correction; to review.—*n.* A second proof-sheet.
- Re-visit'ion (vizh'un), *n.* Act of revising or reviewing.
- Rhét'o-ric (rét'-), *n.* The art of speaking or writing with elegance, propriety, and force.
- Sa-gác'i-ty, *n.* Quick discernment; penetration.
- Sál'u-tá'tion, *n.* Act of greeting another.—*SYN.* Greeting; salute; address.
- Sár-casm, *n.* Bitter reproach.
- Sar-cás'tic, *a.* Bitterly satirical; scornfully severe.
- Sát'ir-ist, *n.* One who writes satire.
- Sci'ence, *n.* [Lat. *scientia*, fr. *scire*, to know.] Knowledge; collection of general principles; philosophical knowledge.
- Soöpe, *n.* Sweep or range of the eye or mind; that at which one aims; free course.—*SYN.* Space; room; intention; tendency; drift.
- Scru'ti-nize, *v. t.* To examine or search closely.
- Self'-con-çeit', *n.* High opinion of one's powers or endowments; vanity.
- Sén'si-bíli-ty, *n.* Capability of sensation; acuteness of perception.
- Sign'i-fi-cá'tion, *n.* Meaning expressed by words or signs.
- Sim-ple'i-ty, *n.* State or quality of being simple; plainness; artlessness; singleness; weakness of intellect.
- Sin-çéri-ty, *n.* Freedom from disguise; honesty.
- Sól'e-cism, *n.* Impropriety in language; any absurdity.
- Sól'vent, *a.* Able to pay debts; dissolving.—*n.* A fluid which dissolves any substance.
- So-nó-roüs, *a.* Giving sound when struck; loud; resounding; high-sounding.
- Spé'cial (spësh'al), *a.* Peculiar; appropriate; specific; particular.
- Spe-cífic, *a.* Distinguishing one from another; comprehended under a kind; peculiar.—*n.* An infallible remedy.
- Spéç'i-men, *n.* A sample; a pattern; a model.
- Spó'u'ta-né'i-ty, *n.* Quality of acting freely without restraint; voluntary action.
- Sté're-o-type, *n.* A plate of type-metal resembling the surface of a page of type.—*v. t.* To make stereotype plates for.
- Stim'u-lus, *n.* Something that rouses either to mental action or to vital energy.
- Stréss, *n.* Pressure; importance; force; urgency.
- Sub-jéct'ive, *a.* Relating to the subject; pertaining to one's own consciousness.
- Sub-ór'di-nate, *a.* Inferior in order or rank; subject.—*n.* An inferior.
- Sub-ór'di-ná'te, *v. t.* To make subordinate or inferior.
- Súb'sti-tú'te, *n.* One person or thing put in place of another.—*v. t.* To put in the place of another.—*SYN.* To exchange; interchange.
- Sug-gést' (or sud-jést'), *v. t.* To hint; to intimate.
- Su'per-cíli-ous, *a.* Haughty; dictatorial; overbearing.
- Su-per'flu-ous, *a.* More than is wanted; useless.
- Su'per-im-póse, *v. t.* To impose or lay on something else.
- Su-pér'la-tive, *a.* Expressing the highest degree; most excellent; supreme.
- Su'per-scrip'tion, *n.* A writing or engraving on the outside or above something else.
- Su'per-vise', *v. t.* To oversee, for direction; to superintend; to inspect.
- Súpp'le-ment, *n.* An addition.
- Sus-çépt'i-ble, *a.* Capable of receiving impressions.

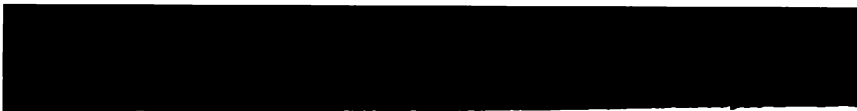
- Syl'la-ble, *n.* A letter or combination of letters uttered together, or by one impulse of the voice.
- Sym'pa-thét'ic, *a.* Having, or produced by, sympathy.
- Sym'pa-thy, *n.* [Gr. *sumpatheia*, from *sun*, with, and *pathos*, suffering.] Fellow-feeling; commiseration; pity.
- Syn'o-nym, *n.* A word which has the same or very nearly the same meaning as another word.
- Syn'the-sis, *n.* Composition, or the putting of two or more things together.
- Táct, *n.* Nice perception or skill.
- Téchnic-al, *a.* Relating to any art, science, or business.
- Terse'ness, *n.* Smoothness and compactness.
- Tóp'ic, *n.* Subject of discourse; a matter treated of.
- Trans-fórm', *v. t.* To change the form or appearance of; to metamorphose.
- Trans-mít', *v. t.* [Lat. *transmittere*, fr. *trans*, across, over, and *mittere*, to send.] To send from one person or place to another.
- Triv'i-al, *a.* Trifling; light; worthless; inconsiderable.
- Túr'gid, *a.* Distended; swelled; tumid; bombastic.
- Typ'ic-al, *a.* Emblematical; figurative.
- Ul-té'ri-or, *a.* Lying beyond; further; more remote.
- Un'im-peach'a-ble, *a.* Not to be impeached; free from stain or fault; blameless.
- Ú'ni-ver'sal, *a.* Extending to all; whole; total.
- Ús'age, *n.* Mode of using; treatment; custom; long-continued practice.
- Vál'id, *a.* [Lat. *validus*, from *valere*, to be strong.] Firm; good in law.
- Va-ri'e-ty, *n.* Change; difference; diversity; that which is various; a varied assortment; a form subordinate to a species.
- Ver-nácl'ú-lar, *a.* Native; belonging to the country of one's birth.
- Vig'i-lance, *n.* Forbearance of sleep; watchfulness.
- Vig'or-ósa, *a.* Full of, or exhibiting, active force.—*SYN.* Strong; powerful; forcible; agile.
- Vín'di-cá'tion, *n.* Justification; defense; support.
- Vo-cáb'ú-la-ry, *n.* A list of words arranged alphabetically and explained; sum of words used.
- Vo-lú'mi-nósa, *a.* Consisting of many volumes; copious.
- Vouch, *v. t.* To call to witness; to warrant; to support; to establish.—*v. i.* To bear witness.
- Wá'ry, *a.* Cautious of danger; prudent; circumspect.











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